

# CHINA AND HER MYSTERIES.



BY  
**ALFRED  
STEAD.**

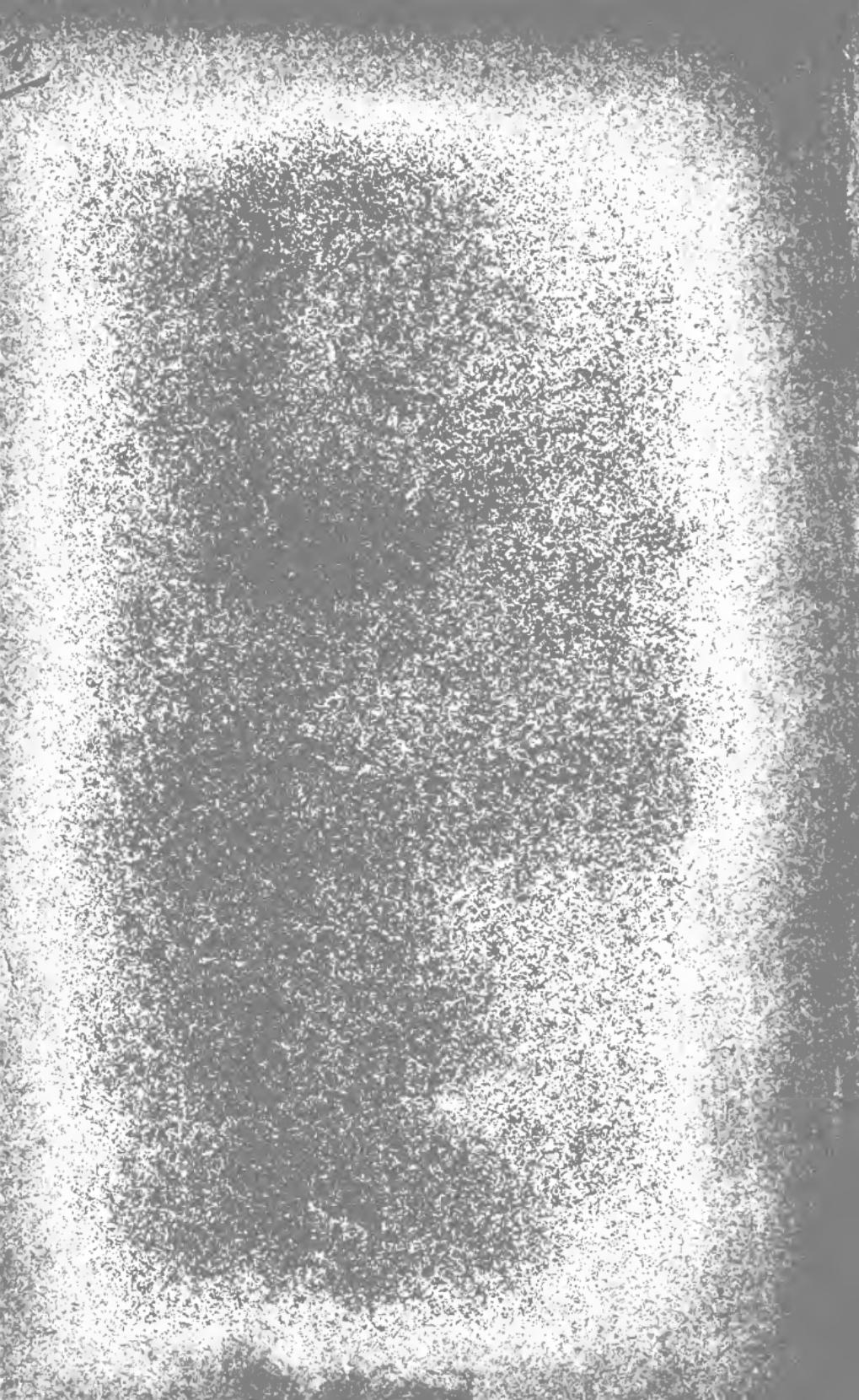


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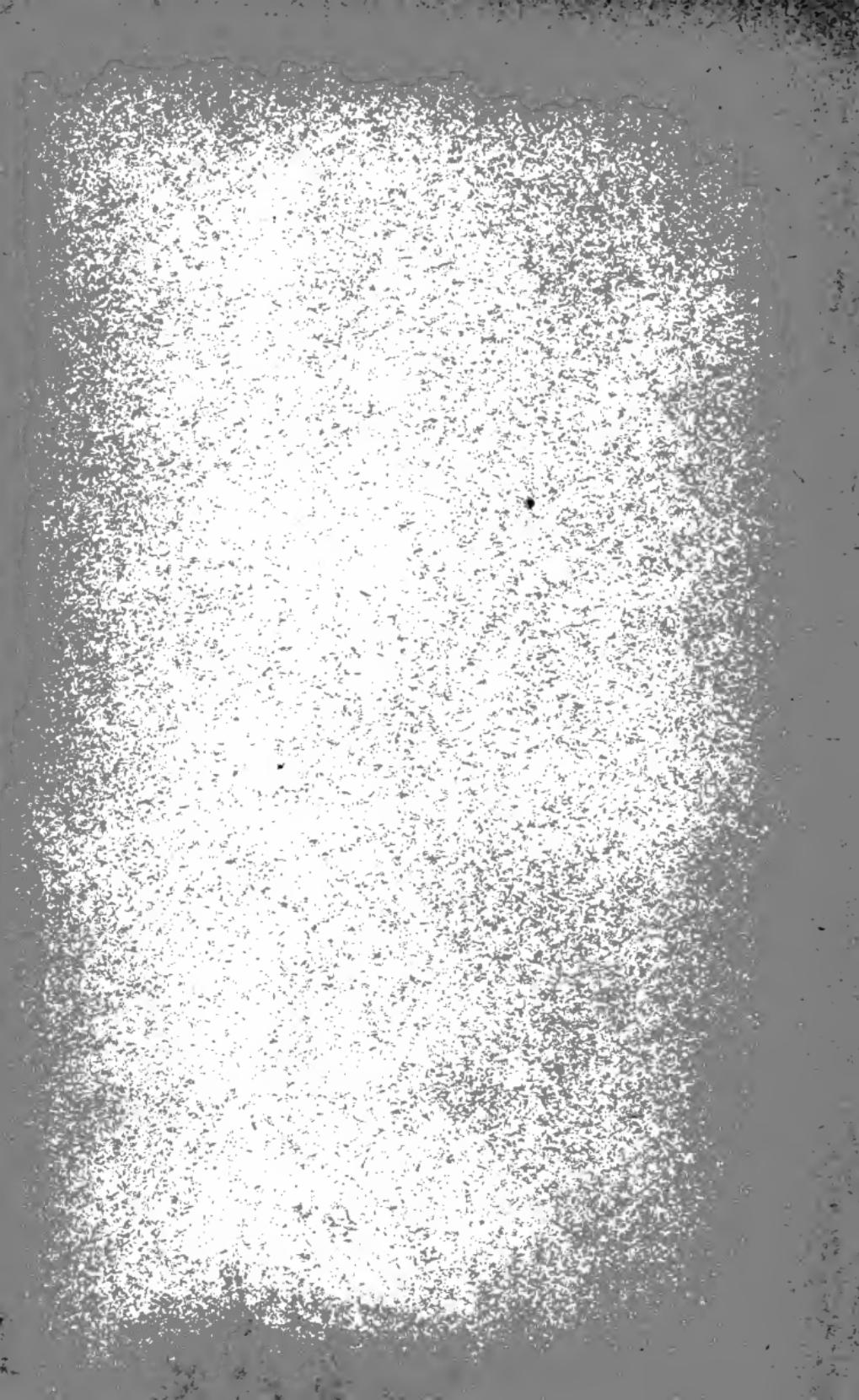


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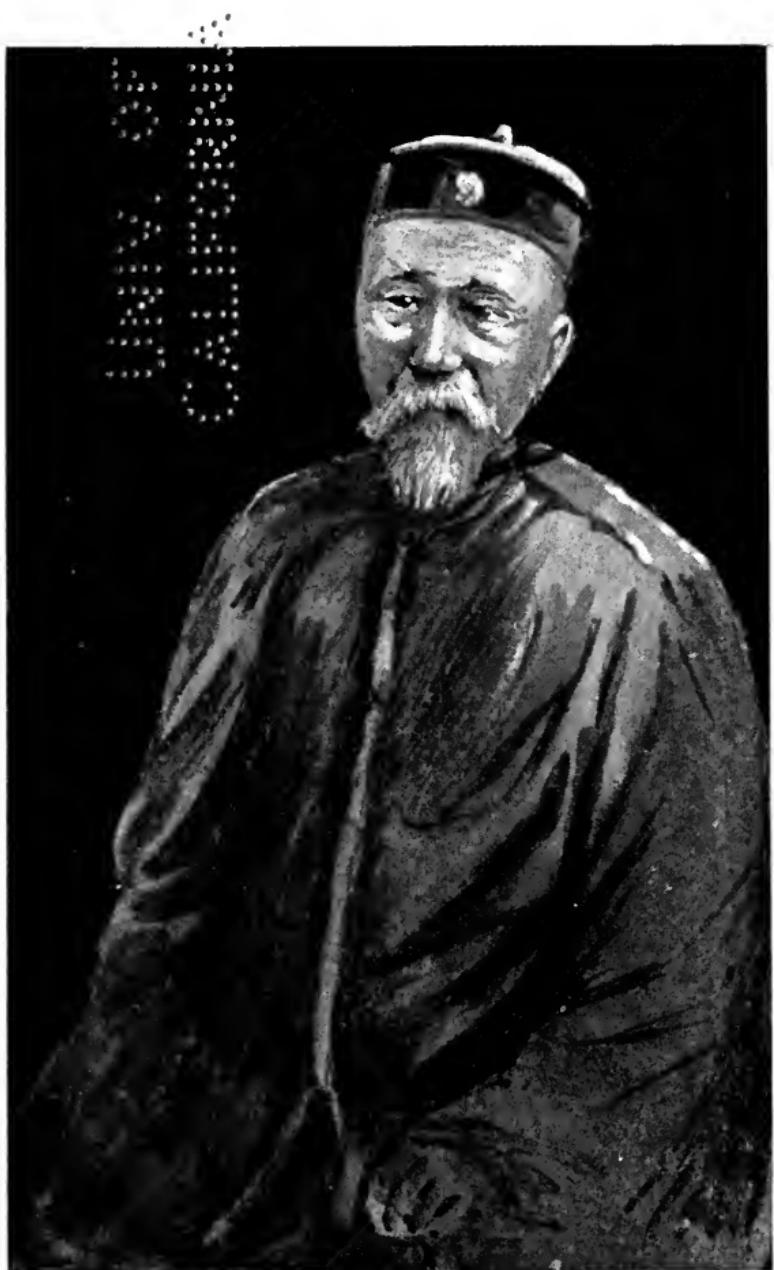




# CHINA AND HER MYSTERIES







*Li Hung Chang.*

# CHINA AND HER MYSTERIES

BY

ALFRED STEAD, F.R.C.I.  
<sub>LL.D.</sub>

*WITH AN INTRODUCTION*

BY

HIS EXCELLENCY BARON HAYASHI  
JAPANESE MINISTER IN LONDON

"In making a candle we seek for light, in reading a book we seek for reason; light to illuminate a dark chamber, reason to enlighten men's hearts."—*Chinese Proverb*.

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I DEDICATE THIS BOOK AND ALL MY LIFE  
TO HER  
WHO HAS MADE ALL THINGS POSSIBLE,  
AND TO WHOM I OWE ALL

## INTRODUCTION

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THE oldest historical records of the Chinese people go back to a period distant more than four thousand years from our own time. They consist chiefly of collections of memoranda of the sayings and actions of the emperors and princes, and of their ministers, and of proclamations made by them on the eve of battle.

From about the eighth century B.C. China possesses written histories in an unbroken series, giving every detail not only of the events in the political and social life of the nation but also of the individual lives of persons of note. Hence it is comparatively easy for an author to write a voluminous history of the country, but the very abundance of the material makes it difficult to present it in a concise and, at the same time, an interesting form.

## INTRODUCTION

The present work of Mr. Alfred Stead is eminently successful in this respect; it is compact, yet it indicates with great clearness the main features of the evolution of Chinese history. These I venture to summarise in the following lines.

In ancient times the central authority in China was very weak. The hereditary dukes and barons were in reality independent sovereigns in their respective States. Opinion on philosophical and ethical subjects was as much decentralised (if such an expression may be allowed) as was political power. This circumstance causing active competition in every department of social life, China had made a wonderful and varied progress in civilisation, which might be compared not unfavourably with that of her contemporaries, the Greeks and Romans.

But after the unification of the whole Empire by Shi-Hwang-ti (the first Emperor of the Ts'in dynasty) in the third century B.C., and the subsequent establishment of a strongly centralised government by the Emperors of the Han dynasty, the doctrines of Koon-fu-tze (Confucius), raised as it were into a State religion, to the exclusion of all other systems of philosophy and ethics, assumed a paramount

authority, and exercised unbounded influence in moulding the moral and political ideas of the Chinese.

The essential feature of the political teaching of the great sages is the supreme importance attached to the individual morality of the ruler, and its prevailing spirit is that intense reverence for antiquity which constitutes the extreme form of Conservatism.

The Chinese mind was so utterly enslaved by the influence of these doctrines, and regarded them as the precepts *par excellence*, that the idea of instituting a comparative study of political or ethical questions was altogether banished therefrom. The inevitable result was the careful preservation of the civilisation acquired during a period of greater receptivity, but a complete cessation of all further progress.

The number of dynasties that have ruled over either the whole or a part of the Chinese Empire from the time of the Ts'in dynasty to that of the Manchus, which reigns at the present day, is about thirty. The length of time during which each of these held sway varies greatly, namely, from a period of several centuries to one of a few years only. But, when a dynasty continued in power for any length of time, it was invariably the case that the earlier members

## INTRODUCTION

of it enjoyed to the full peace and tranquillity, as the rulers who raised themselves to the throne were, without exception, men of extraordinary ability and wisdom, and took care to gain the affection of the nation by making the administration of the government conform as nearly as possible to the ideal upheld by Koon-fut-ze; but the later princes of the same dynasty, brought up in the midst of opulence and luxury, became demoralised by self-indulgence. Often a favourite mistress or an ambitious eunuch usurped the sovereign power, and by the abuse of it fomented the discontent of the people. Whereupon some popular minister or general, or, in modern times, a foreign conqueror, would displace the old dynasty and establish his own.

Thus the truth of the old saying that "history repeats itself" is amply exemplified in the case of China, even the foreign dynasties of the Tartars and Mongols experiencing the vicissitudes of fortune in the same way as the others.

Another point not less remarkable in the history of China is the fact that, although the imperial succession is hereditary, the founders of each new dynasty were generally self-made men, and not of

high extraction, purity of blood not being considered of importance by the Chinese. According to their political creed the Emperors are the chosen ministers of Heaven, placed over them as their guardians. The natural gifts of wisdom and ability are, in their opinion, the most incontestable evidence of the favour shown by Heaven to the person who possesses them.

Careful readers of the work now presented to them by Mr. Stead will find all the prominent features of Chinese life lucidly set forth therein, and will be put in possession of knowledge that will greatly assist them to understand the general direction of the ideas and sentiments of those many hundred millions of Chinese who are now becoming an important factor in international politics.

HAYASHI.

*November 1, 1900.*



# CHINA AND HER MYSTERIES



## CHAPTER I

### THE ANTIQUITY OF CHINA

THERE is a Chinese proverb which is most suitable to be placed at the beginning of an account of the most ancient and wonderful history of China. "Ancient and modern times," it says, "form but a single age of the world; under the entire expanse of heaven, all beings are one family." This saying has been borne out in the history of the Chinese, who, although undoubtedly the oldest nation in the world, still are practically the same as they were several thousand years before the Christian era. Though all the rest of the world might change, and even though foreign conquerors ruled over them, the Chinese continued always the same, and the foreigners conformed to their ideas and became Chinese to all intents and purposes.

The beginning of Chinese history is buried in obscurity, and the earliest records, being purely legendary, give small clue as to the origin of the race. There are many students who believe that the forefathers of the Chinese first started from near the south of the Caspian Sea. Proof would seem to be forthcoming that these early settlers came from Babylonia, and there are certainly many striking similarities to be found. From the Babylonian monuments we learn that the early Turanian inhabitants were an industrious, law-abiding people; that they delighted in peace, and considered war an uncultured accomplishment; they were also skilled in mechanical arts. In stature they were short and thick-set, with black hair and slanting eyes. Besides the fact that this description exactly fits the case of the Chinese, there are additional proofs to be found in the language and the written characters. Such an explanation of the origin of the Chinese settlers helps greatly to an understanding of the early civilisation to be found among them. The legendary records simply announce that such and such a king introduced a certain invention as a *fait accompli*; there is never any mention of gradual development in the ancient history of China.

However that may be, and wherever the early settlers came from, there is small doubt that the

history of China dates back as early as 2852 B.C. Before this date there are several purely mythological characters, such as P'an-ku, who first gave the heavens and the earth their shape; Yu-chau, originator of the idea of house-building; Sui-jin, the producer of fire and introducer of cooking—he also invented the system of recording events by means of knots in strings, a method which has travelled through many lands since then. From 2852 to 1101 B.C. may be described as the legendary period.

The first of the legendary rulers was Fuh-ti, who spent the hundred and fifteen years of his reign in introducing numerous benefits to his people. He instituted the laws of marriage, and invented the lute and the lyre. Chief among his innovations must be counted the invention of the six classes of written characters; these were chiefly symbolic, and from them have grown the six classes of characters in use at the present day. Fuh-ti also divided the people into clans and taught them to fish with nets and to rear domestic animals.

His successor, Shen-nung, was known as the "Prince of Cereals," owing to the developments he introduced into farming. He invented the plough, and examined the different qualities of soil in his dominions, and instructed the farmers what to cultivate in each kind of soil. He also discovered

many medicinal herbs, and is said to have written a pharmacopœia.

However inaccurate the accounts of these early rulers may be, they are of undoubted interest as giving an indication of the advance of civilisation even at that early date.

In 2697 B.C. Hwang-ti was elected Emperor, after the overthrow of the ancient dynasty by the feudal chiefs. This ruler was the first to assume the title of Emperor, and was a wise and able man. He introduced the decimal system into the weights and measures as well as into the administration. He invented also the Chinese cycle of sixty years, which has been used since his day. His queen inaugurated the silk industry, and her *image* is still to be found in the great silk districts of China. Hwang-ti taught his subjects to work in wood, pottery, and metal, and also how to make carts and boats. Chinese historians dwell upon his memory with unfailing praise.

With the Emperor Yao the legendary period comes to a close, and we have the records of Confucius to assist us. With this ruler begins the first of the great dynasties, which have successively ruled China. Before dealing with them we will glance hastily at the general condition of China in the early ages.

The most striking facts with regard to Chinese

history are its remarkable unity, *perpetuity*, and also the utter state of isolation in which this great nation has existed. The great extent of country covered by the Empire enabled the Chinese to be self-supporting and self-contained; they therefore never felt the need of intercourse with the outside world.

Even if they had wished to open up relations with other countries, nature had made it extremely difficult. On the land side there were almost insurmountable ranges of mountains, while from their coasts the Chinese could see no land. The sea was not used even for transportation, the internal waterways being well-developed and sufficient. Thus there were no temptations for the Chinese to leave their own country in search of others; it is certain that they never felt the longing to do so.

The Chinese Empire has undergone many vicissitudes and passed through many trials, but these have never succeeded in breaking away any portion of the people, or in affecting in the slightest degree the Chinese civilisation. The Chinese have frequently extended their boundaries, and nearly always by means of peaceful settlement rather than by wars of conquest. A strong virile race, they speedily outnumbered the original inhabitants of the country in which they settled, and became the leading power in the new territory. A study of

these pages of Chinese history will reward all those who are desirous of encouraging the immigration in large numbers of Chinese labourers into sparsely populated countries.

As may be seen from the brief accounts of the early rulers the Chinese possessed many forms of civilisation more than two thousand years before the Christian era. It was, however, after the year 206 B.C. that Chinese civilisation reached its highest point. At this point advancement ceased, and civilisation remains to-day where it was two thousand years ago, absolutely uninfluenced by the discoveries and changes of the outer world.

However much modern European civilisation may affect to look down upon Chinese civilisation, it has in the past drawn many of its most important inventions from China. Thus we find that the Chinese knew of and used such things as the compass, porcelain, gunpowder, and movable type for printing, long before the people of the Western civilisation dreamed of such inventions. It is not surprising, though possibly not pleasing to Europeans, therefore, to learn that the Chinese regard them and their civilisation with contemptuous pity, refusing for a moment to consider them as other than inferior races. It is inevitable that such should be their feeling, and its extent may be gauged by the pride of superiority which a European country feels over

a savage nation, almost entirely without civilisation and culture. It is the kind of pity which a superior being feels for an inferior one. In the case of China the superior being has not mixed with other nations, and has for thousands of years occupied a position far above that of any of the neighbouring states.

Though existing records might lead us to believe that the Chinese were born as a nation with their civilisation ready-made, there is no doubt, even if this were the case, but that they owe its perfection to their industry. No work was too great for them, no period of time too long to devote to the accomplishment of a certain end. Whatever faults may be laid at the door of the Chinese, their industry and patience from time immemorial have been the wonder of the world.

## CHAPTER II

### THE PHYSICAL FEATURES OF CHINA

THE Chinese Empire occupies nearly one-tenth of the whole surface of the globe, and contains over 400,000,000 inhabitants! It is difficult adequately to realise the magnitude of these numbers, and still more impossible to imagine how so large a portion of this earth could have remained a practically *terra incognita* to everybody outside its frontiers. Yet the very size of the Chinese Empire helps to explain how easy it was for the inhabitants to remain independent of the outside world. There was ample space for every necessary of life within the Empire, and many sparsely inhabited districts for those who desired change of abode. Of course in the early ages the Empire did not embrace the extent of territory it now has.

The Chinese divide their Empire into three great parts, and diverse forms of government obtain within the three divisions. These divisions are—

- I. THE EIGHTEEN PROVINCES, or China Proper.
- II. MANCHURIA, the native country of the Manchus, lying north of the Gulf of Liantung.
- III. COLONIAL POSSESSIONS, including Mongolia, Ili (composed of Sungaria and Eastern Turkestan), Koko-nor and Tibet.

The Eighteen Provinces is the division to which other nations have given the name of China, and which is inhabited by the Chinese Proper. It is curious to note that the name "China" is not used by the Chinese at all; when speaking of China Proper they call it either the Eighteen Provinces or else the Middle Kingdom. It is probable that the name "China" had its origin in the family of Ts'in, famous in the earlier history of the country, and whose chiefs obtained complete sway in 250 B.C.

The Eighteen Provinces lie on the eastern slope of the high tableland of Central Asia, in the south-eastern angle of the Continent. They compare favourably with any other portion of the world for fertility, climate, navigable rivers, and variety of productions. Their area is 1,297,999 square miles.

The whole of the Empire may be divided into the mountainous and hilly country and the Great Plain. The Great Plain lies in the north-east, and

forms the richest part of the Empire, while the mountainous country lies west of the meridian,  $112^{\circ}$  to the borders of Tibet; the hilly country is found east of the meridian and south of the Yang-tse-kiang Valley. The Plain has an area of about 210,000 square miles, which is about equal to the Plain of Bengal drained by the Ganges. The Great Plain is for the most part extremely fertile, and produces large quantities of silk, tea, cotton, grain, and tobacco. It is most densely populated, the census of 1862 giving its inhabitants as 177,000,000. North of the Great Plain the country is dry and sandy, though capable of producing millet, wheat, and vegetables.

Except to the west of Yunnan and on the border between Ili and the Kirghiz Steppe, there is a natural wall of mountains enclosing the Empire. To this natural wall is due to some extent China's ability to maintain her isolation for so many hundreds of years. There was no easy approach to the Empire, either by land or by sea. There are four great mountain chains within the confines of the Empire beside those forming its frontiers. It will thus be seen that a great portion of China is mountainous; in fact four-fifths of the Empire is mountainous or hilly—if we leave out of account the vast desert of Gobi; and, for the most part, the country is fertile and capable of abundant production under the labour of the husbandman.

Nearly 1,200,000 square miles of the Empire are occupied by the vast desert of Gobi or Sha-moh (signifying "Sandy Sea"). While there are some portions of this desert which are not quite sterile, the greater part is best described in the words of a Chinese author, who says: "There is neither water, herb, man, nor smoke; if there is no smoke, there is absolutely nothing."

The glory of China is her rivers, and they are also the main source of her prosperity. China possesses four great rivers—the Amour, the Hoang-ho, or Yellow River, the Yang-tse-kiang, and the Chu-kiang; by means of their main trunks and of their tributaries water communication is easily kept up both east and west, north and south.

The Yellow River is the most celebrated, though not the most useful or the largest of Chinese rivers. Its early course is wonderfully winding, as may be judged from the fact that near its source it flows south 30 miles, then east 160, then west about 120, and lastly north-east. During its course to the Great Plain, the waters of the Hoang-ho become tinged with the clay which gives it both its colour and its name. The area of the basin of the Yellow River is estimated at 700,000 square miles, and its length from source to mouth is nearly 2500 miles, although much of this is spent in windings, the direct distance being 1290 miles.

The furious current renders it practically useless for navigation, and endangers the cities built near its bed. In past centuries the river has frequently overflowed its banks, and changed its course with disastrous effect upon the neighbouring population. In the earliest legends of Chinese history mention is made of great leaders who first obtained prominence through their success in restraining the Yellow River.

The Yang-tse-kiang ("Son of the Ocean"), has a length of nearly 3000 miles, though there is little known of its early course or of its source. This river is quite different in character from the Yellow River, being uniform and deep in its lower courses. Thus we find that it is available for boats 1700 miles from its mouth, while large vessels can safely reach Nanking 200 miles from the coast. The banks of the Yang-tse-kiang are more stable, and there is never much danger of inundations. Many of its tributaries are also navigable; indeed there is no river in the world which exceeds this for the arrangement of its subsidiary streams, which render the whole basin accessible. The Yang-tse-kiang has been termed the Girdle of China, from its almost central course, and from the number of provinces through which it passes.

The value of the river and its valley may be estimated from the fact that when Great Britain

succeeded in establishing a sphere of influence over the Yang-tse-kiang Valley, a leading Russian diplomatist described it as being worse for his country than if she had been beaten in two great wars and had had to make ruinous conditions of peace.

The Chu-kiang River drains the southern portion of China, although its form is much less regular than those of the two great rivers. This river is formed by three principal branches, respectively known as the East, North, and West Rivers—all of which are navigable for the greater part of their courses. All these rivers flow into the sea at Canton.

There are innumerable other rivers of lesser importance flowing from the west to the east of China, which all aid in the water communication so essential to the welfare of the Empire.

The coast-line of China is extremely dangerous, being lined with multitudes of islands, from Hainan to the mouth of the Yang-tse-kiang, while northward to Liau-king the shores are low and abound in shoals. The shores of the Yellow Sea are unapproachable, and vessels of any size have to anchor miles out from land. At Taku it is recorded that a Japanese ambassador to Peking was not aware of the fact that the forts were saluting him until a boat came from the forts to inform him of the fact—the

anchorage was too far away to allow of the guns being heard!

The chief trading ports are Hongkong, Amoy, Shanghai, although only the first of these can be called a good harbour. Then there are the naval bases so eagerly sought by Western powers, Kiaouchau, Wei-hai-Wei, Port Arthur, and Chemulpo. To add to the difficulties of navigation in the Yellow Sea, the silt brought down by the Yellow River and the Yang-tse-kiang is gradually filling it up.

However lavish nature may have been with the Chinese in respect to rivers and harbours, it must be admitted that the industry of the people has enhanced the gifts of nature in the most remarkable degree. The public works of China have not their equals in the world. In many cases they have altered entirely the natural aspect of the country—the Great Wall, for example, is said to be the only *artificial* structure which would arrest attention on a hasty survey of the surface of the globe. Though this is a great work, there are others as great to look at, and of still greater actual importance to the country. The Great Wall was built about 220 B.C., by Hwang-ti of the Ts'in dynasty, to protect his dominions from the incursions of the Northern tribes. The Chinese name for the wall signifies the “Myriad-mile Wall,” and certainly its length of

1250 miles justifies such a title. That it has stood for over two thousand years is sufficient proof of the excellence of its materials and construction. The Wall varies in size in different parts of its course, the eastern wall being more substantial than the western. It is generally composed of a mound of earth and stones, faced with masonry, the height being from 15 to 30 feet. In thickness the wall varies from 25 feet at the base to 15 feet at the top. There are brick towers upon it at irregular intervals, of about 40 feet in height; they are independent structures, about 40 feet square at the base and 30 feet at the top. While it is probable that this wall served its purpose to some extent in the past, at present it is simply a geographical boundary, and is not kept in repair except at the passes.

One writer gives the following description of the general effect produced upon the spectator by this one of the hugest works of man:—

"It asserts its individuality by stretching away on each side of the valley, up steep slopes, and from peak to peak, until it is lost to view at the top of those high and picturesque mountains. There in the Pass is the view of the Wall commonly given in books, impressing the imagination of the youth as he studies his geography. One sees at a glance what herculean efforts must have been put forth to raise so much brick and mortar to such heights, and build it there—a great work of national defence at the time, and a wonder for all subsequent ages to behold. A proverb says that 'building the Great Wall spoiled one generation, but saved a thousand.'

"If the weather is good, the wall almost gleams in the sunshine, extending like a light grey ribbon along the ridge of the mountains, waving up and down, reaching from summit to summit, surmounted at its highest points by a square tower that stands out against the sky, defying wind and weather, as it once defied the Mongol hordes. The wall stretches away from Ch'a Tao to the south-west, and the eye can follow it for twenty or thirty miles, except where it crosses deep valleys or is hidden behind the nearer peaks. . . ."

The other great public work of China specially deserving of mention is the Grand Canal, which, however, has in recent years lost much of its original value as a waterway owing to neglect. Formerly, by its means, together with the rivers which flow into it, an almost entire water communication across the country from Peking to Canton was obtained. Its connection with the great rivers enabled goods to pass from the capital to nearly every large town in the riverine basins. The Grand Canal was the work of Kublai, one of the monarchs of the Mongol dynasty. Begun in 1282 A.D., it was completed in seven years. There had been various channels before this date, and additions were made to the canal under the Ming dynasty.

The total length of the Grand Canal is about 650 miles, and it is quite unique to this day in Asia. It passes through alluvial soil all along its course, and thus the chief labour was expended in con-

structing embankments, not in digging a channel. The northern terminus of the canal is generally given as Tientsin, although it actually begins at Lintsing-chau in Shantung. The canal flows into the Yellow River 70 miles from its mouth, and then reaches the Yang-tse-kiang by means of a 90 mile embankment not less than 20 feet above the surrounding country! The greatness of this work may be appreciated better when we consider that the canal is about 200 feet wide, and has a current of three miles an hour; the embankments are of earth, held together by stone walls, and frequently a thickness of 100 feet is to be found. Though much of the mechanism of the canal would appear rude to our eyes, we must remember that the objects desired are all fully gained, and that the very simplicity of the means rather adds to the merit of the achievement.

There are several other canals in the Empire, but none at all equal to the Grand Canal. In a country where nearly all the travel is by water, it is only natural to find that the public roads are neglected.

The difficulties of obtaining a correct census of the population of China are immense; the inhabitants do not assist the officials in their work, and frequently the latter are content to fill in their reports with imaginary numbers, generally an increase upon the efforts of the last census-taker.

The census taken in 1881 by the officials of the Chinese Customs may be regarded as being as nearly accurate as is possible in the present state of China. This census gives the population at 380,000,000 for China Proper; Tibet, Eastern Turkestan, and Manchuria are not included.

The following extract is taken from a *North China Herald* of 1890, and is interesting in as far as it throws much light upon the causes of the increase of about 2,500,000 a year:—

“The causes of increase are always at work. They are the thoroughness of agriculture, the fertility of the soil, the anxiety of parents to see their sons married by the time they are eighteen, the willingness of the women to be married about seventeen, the equality of the sons as heirs to property, the thrifty habits of the people, and their adaptability to a variety of occupations requiring skill and industry. The conclusion at which we arrive is that none of the provinces are populated up to the point at which the soil cannot maintain the inhabitants. When drought and war occur, the people fly to the next province. The provinces take their turn in being thickly or thinly populated, and with new aids against famines and civil wars they might, it would seem, support 800,000,000 without much difficulty.”

## CHAPTER III

### THE GOVERNMENT OF CHINA

THE theory of the Chinese Government is patriarchal, as in the earliest days of its history when Yao ruled as a patriarchal chieftain. The Government is to-day what it has always been ; there are practically no changes to record.

The Emperor is at the head, then follow his Court and the Bureaucracy ; the people come last. The Emperor reigns supreme over all ; he is "the sole head of the Chinese constitution and government ; he is regarded as the viceregent of Heaven, especially chosen to govern all nations ; and is supreme in everything, holding at once the highest legislative and executive powers, without limit or control." The Emperor holds himself superior to all gods, and even condescends occasionally to grant titles of honour to them, and to promote them in their hierarchies. "He is the head of religion, and the only one qualified to adore Heaven ; he is the source of law and dispenser of mercy ; no right can be held

in opposition to his pleasure, no claim maintained against him, and no privilege protect from his wrath." He is also the Buddha of the present day to his people, a title which carries more weight in Mongolia and Tibet than in China itself.

The following quotation from the inaugural proclamation of one of the recent Emperors is of interest, showing as it does the position to which the ruler considers himself entitled:—

"Lo ! now, on succeeding to the throne, I shall exercise myself to give repose to the millions of my people. Assist me to sustain the burden laid on my shoulders ! With veneration I receive charge of Heaven's great concerns. Ye kings and statesmen, great and small, civil and military, everyone be faithful and devoted, and aid in supporting the vast affair—that our family dominion may be preserved hundreds and tens of thousands of years, in never-ending tranquillity and glory ! Promulgate this to all under heaven—cause everyone to hear it !"

While the right of succession is by custom hereditary in the male line, it is not usual to announce the name of the heir-apparent during the reign of the Emperor.

With all his power, and though he ranks as Celestial, the present Emperor, (Kwang-Su = one possessed of complete virtues, and able to act on heavenly principles), is practically a prisoner in the



*The Canal through the Court before the Emperor's Palace.*



Imperial Palace at Peking. The grounds are a microcosm of the Empire, but this does not make the captivity more enjoyable. Seldom does the Emperor emerge from that isolation which has earned him the title of *Kwa jin*, the solitary man; when he does, all his subjects prostrate themselves, and do not dare to look him in the face.

The hereditary aristocracy of China consists of but few and unimportant members. There are also five higher orders of nobility and four lower, conferred without distinction on Manchus, Mongols, and Chinese, both civil and military. The higher orders are Kung, Hou, Pih, Tzu, Nan, generally rendered in English by duke, marquis, earl, viscount, and baron; the four lower orders may be classed as knighthoods. Unless titles are conferred in perpetuity, they lose one degree of nobility with each step of descent. Thus the title of Kung, or duke, will reach the lowest round in twenty-six generations, and so on.

The nobles have not necessarily any share in the government. This is wholly in the hands of the mandarins—officers belonging to the people, who are supposed to owe their positions to success in the examinations. The Imperial Government has, however, found it necessary to reward those who subscribe large sums of money for relief works, by granting them official positions. It is probable that about

one-half of the mandarins in China have received their positions by this method.

So minutely are the gradations of ranks enforced, and so strict is the surveillance exercised by every man over his neighbour, that the power of conspiracy has been reduced to a minimum, and is less than in any other despotic country in the world.

The Empire is divided into eighteen provinces, fifteen of which are grouped into eight viceroyalties, the other three are administered by governors. The viceroys and governors are practically monarchs in their own provinces, and so long as they forward the regular quota of taxes to Peking, they have a free hand allowed them.

When it is understood that a viceroy of a province as large as a European kingdom only receives about £6000 a year, it is evident that it is almost a necessity for the official to squeeze extra payment from his taxpayers. These latter do not grumble at this course ; justice is a matter of price, and the official reaps his harvest during his three years of office.

According to tradition the people are the most important part of the Empire, and the Emperor the least. This, however, is not borne out in actual practice, and the necessity for providing positions for the ever-swelling ranks of mandarins renders, year by year, the lot of the common people more

and more overburdened. It is a significant fact that there is no word in the Chinese language to express "liberty."

Mandarins are frequently taken from the people, and many cases have occurred where wood-cutters or labourers have risen to high positions. The democratic system of examination enables the poorest to obtain official positions; when the poor man becomes a mandarin it is harder than ever for his old companions and friends.

There are civil and military mandarins; both classes are divided into nine grades. These grades are distinguished by the colour and nature of the button worn on the official cap, by the pattern embroidered on the official robes, and by the girdle clasp. The military class is much lower than civil; indeed, the Chinese regard the profession of arms with disdain, and do not dream of expecting the same literary knowledge from those following it as they would from aspirants after civil honours. The military have no part in the central government.

Although the Emperor is supreme, he has two imperial councils to advise him, and to enable him to be in touch with the people. These councils are deliberative bodies, and the active administration rests upon six subordinate boards. The two councils are the *Nuiko*, or Cabinet, and the *Chiinc-Chu*, or Council of State. The former consists giving

Chinese and three Manchu councillors, together with many mandarins of the highest degrees. Its duties are "to deliberate on the government of the Empire, to proclaim abroad the imperial pleasure, and to regulate the Canons of State, together with the whole administration of the great balance of power, thus aiding the Emperor in directing the affairs of State." The councillors meet every morning with the Emperor, and present the State Papers necessary for the administration to him. After he has passed them, they are handed to one of the boards for execution. The Cabinet is essentially an advisory body, and originates nothing.

The Council of State, on the other hand, determines policies and decides on the course of action to be pursued in all branches of the administration. Its members are appointed by the Emperor, and generally are four in number, two Manchus and two Chinese. Their decisions on ordinary matters are forwarded to the Cabinet for promulgation, but secret orders pass through the Board of War.

From the carefully kept minutes of this council the *Peking Gazette* is published. In this are found the imperial edicts, official announcements, etc.; it is one of the oldest journals of the world.

The six boards deal with all the administrative details of the Empire. It will suffice to give the year <sup>1887</sup> each board from the official books.

1. *The Civil Office.*—Its duties include “whatever appertains to the plans of selecting rank and official gradation, to the rules determining degradation and promotion, to the ordinances of granting investitures and rewards, and the laws for fixing schedules and furloughs, that there may be a full and constant supply of officials.”

2. *The Board of Revenue* “directs the territorial government of the Empire, and keeps the lists of populations, in order to aid the Emperor in nourishing all people; whatever pertains to the regulations for levying and collecting salaries and allowances, to the rates for receipts and disbursements at the treasuries, and to the rights of transporting by land and water, is reported to this board, that sufficient supplies for the country may be provided.”

This board has as its principal work the taking of the census; the mint also comes under its jurisdiction.

3. *The Board of Rites* “examines and directs concerning the performance of the five kinds of ritual observances, and makes proclamation thereof to the whole Empire, thus aiding the Emperor in guiding all people. Whatever appertains to the ordinances for regulating precedence and literary distinctions, to the canons for maintaining religious honour and fidelity, to the orders respecting intercourse and tribute, and to the forms of giving

banquets and granting bounties, is reported to this board, in order to promote national education."

4. *The Board of War* is entrusted with "the duty of aiding the sovereign to protect the people, by the direction of all military affairs in the metropolis and the provinces, and to regulate the affairs of the State, in accordance with the reports received from the various departments regarding deprivation of, or appointment to office, succession to or creation of hereditary military rank, postal or courier arrangements, examination and selection of deserving official candidates, and the accuracy of returns."

The postal service is practically confined to official despatches and the provincial and household troops under special authorities, so the duties of this board are not so important as they seem.

5. *The Board of Punishments* "has the government and direction of punishments throughout the Empire, for the purpose of aiding the sovereign in correcting all people. Whatever appertains to measures for applying the laws with leniency or severity, to the task of hearing evidence and giving decisions, to the rights of granting pardons, reprieves, or otherwise, and to the rates of fines and interest, are all reported to this board, to aid in giving dignity to national manners."

The laws affecting this board are full of mercy

and fine justice, but its acts are hated everywhere for their injustice and cruelty. Even Chinese critics condemn the system in vogue in the prisons under this board.

6. *The Board of Works* "has the government and direction of the public works throughout the Empire, together with the current expenses of the same." . . .

This board is one of the most incapable of Chinese institutions. The Yellow River, the Grand Canal, and the high roads, once the admiration of travellers, now all tell the tale of corruption and incompetence in the Board of Works.

*The Tsung-li-Yamen*, or Foreign Office, is quite a modern institution, and was created after the war in 1860; before that date the *Colonial Office* had dealt with all foreign affairs. There are eleven officials in the Tsung-li-Yamen, all of whom hold other offices. It is with this office that the ministers of the Powers deal, and formerly they were obliged to present their credentials to the Tsung-li-Yamen instead of to the Emperor. The war with Japan, however, gained for the representatives of the Powers the right of direct presentation to the Emperor. The members of the Tsung-li-Yamen have shown wonderful skill in procrastination and in the playing off of the various Powers against each other.

In the *Tu-chah-Yuen*, or Censorate, there is found a curious example of Chinese contradic-

tion. Its duties are the "care of manners and customs, the investigation of all public offices within and without the capital, the discrimination between the good and bad performance of the business transacted in them, and between the depravity and uprightness of the officers employed; the duty of urging its members to utter each his sentiments and reproofs, in order to cause officers to be diligent in attention to their daily duties, and to render the government of the Empire stable." Everyone knows that to carry out these duties would mean the rightful impeachment of almost every mandarin in China. There are fifty-six censors in the eighteen provinces, and, realising as they do that it would be useless to act up to their full duties, they devote their energies to a few flagrant cases, or else work up fussy little grievances. The censors may denounce anybody—even the Emperor, and on occasion they do so; it is, however, hardly wise to denounce the Emperor of a despotic country.

*The Colonial Office* was formerly entrusted with the whole of the foreign relations of the Empire, but is now practically confined to Mongolia and Tibet.

The government of China is a curious example of how a stable if not a good rule may be maintained, thanks to a minutely worked-out system of surveillance and mutual responsibility. Every man, knowing that he is watched, fears to do anything

out of the regular run of life, lest he be denounced as a conspirator or a dangerous character. Again, every official is responsible to the official just above him, who must answer for him to *his* superior. The fact that the mandarins extort money raises up hosts of spies and informers; thus, there is always a check upon rapacity, because in eastern despotic countries officials fall easily and quickly.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE RELIGIONS OF CHINA AND THEIR EFFECT UPON THE NATIONAL LIFE

**I**T is most difficult, if not absolutely impossible, to state which is the religion of the Chinese. It would seem that the Chinaman does not possess religious sentiment to any great extent. Thus, from the three great religions or schools of teaching in China—Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism—he prefers to evolve an amalgam suited to his daily life. Thus we see that he moulds his religion upon his life much more than his life upon his religion.

Professor Douglas in his book, *Society in China*, says of this question :—

“ Religious sentiment is not a characteristic of the Chinese. Their views on the subject of faith are wanting in definitiveness, and are so indistinct and blurred that it might surpass the wit of man to determine what is the prevailing religion of the country. The multitude of Buddhist temples which cover the face of the land might naturally suggest that the majority of the people profess the religion of Buddha, while conversations with native scholars would unquestionably lead one to believe that

the educated classes were to a man Confucianists. Taoism, the third religion which holds sway in China, does not make the same pretension to popularity as do the other two faiths. As a matter of fact, however, it would probably be difficult to find many Chinamen who are Confucianists pure and simple, or many who rest contented with the worship provided in Buddhist temples. A combination of the two—an amalgam in which the materialism of Confucius and the religious faith of Sâkyamuni mutually supplement one another—enters into the life of the people at large, while Taoism supplies a certain amount of superstitious lore which these lack."

The opinion of a missionary of the North China Mission may be of interest; he speaks of "the almost entire earthliness of the native mind, and its contentedness with a peaceable and industrious existence. The Chinaman does have one, and only one, belief about the future. 'The better we do here the better for us there, if there is a there.' This too scanty creed generally satisfies the shrivelled mind, and thus expediency becomes the highest standard, and of this every man is his own judge."

Both these extracts give the opinion of foreigners upon the religious beliefs of China, and may be at fault, from the fact that it is difficult for one of our Western civilisation to get so thoroughly in touch with Chinese ideas as to enable him to deliver a really final judgment.

Let us, therefore, contrast their opinions with those of a Chinaman himself. They are interesting in that they supply some points which are ignored

in the criticisms of the Europeans. Speaking of the three religions professed in China, this writer says :—

“The religious system of Lao-tze, of which the adherents are called Taoists, admits metempsychosis ; its disciples are chiefly found among the unlettered classes.

“The system of Fo, better known under the name of Buddhism, is a metaphysical doctrine pregnant with vast and profound speculations.

“Finally, the religion of the literary class is that of Confucius ; it is a pure morality, preaching the most elevated sentiments, and having for its ultimate object the perfection of man by the education of his moral sense.”

Passing on to the subject of ancestral worship in China this educated Chinaman gives his opinion of at least one point in Western civilisation in such a way as may call us to the remembrance that many of our religious creeds and institutions must seem curious indeed in the eyes of the Eastern peoples. The writer continues :—

“It is to this system of religion and philosophy that the worship of ancestors owes its chief support, though more or less it is practised throughout China, independent of religious belief.

“In the West, forgetfulness of the dead is, I believe, quite the rule. They are buried in cemeteries, where their tombs are forgotten, and in a short while destroyed to make room for new-comers : these cities of the dead are as melancholy as places accursed. Our dead are never forgotten ; we carry them to the hills, nearer to the skies, and there, in the midst of eternal nature, they sleep undisturbed their eternal sleep. Their memories are ever kept fresh, and their deeds

are recorded as an example to future generations. The cult is spread among rich and poor alike, and every individual feels that he is a part of a whole, and not a mere isolated being on the face of the earth: he feels that behind him are ascendants beseeching him to do his duty as a man and as their descendant, and to educate his progeny in the path of righteousness and virtue, so that they in their turn may hand down to future generations the traditions of honour and nobility that alone can give vitality and strength to a race."

Which all tends to show how much depends upon the point of view.

Confucianism is the only one of the three systems which originated in China; it was formulated by one man, and is one of the most wonderful testimonies possible to his intimate knowledge of the character of his fellow-countrymen. Confucius devoted his system to expounding the duty which each man owes to his fellow-man, and ignored the obligations under which man in general is in relation to society.

Confucius was born in 551 B.C. in Shantung. Most of his life was spent in wanderings throughout China, in which he endeavoured to discover some ruler who would be willing to model his government upon the Confucian ideas. As these were essentially peaceful, and as the times were filled incessantly with the clash of arms, each state striving to maintain its station against the attacks of its neighbours, it is small wonder that Confucius did

not find an abiding home. Since his death, however, he has received ample recognition ; he has been deified, and instead of directing one small state he has come nearer to directing the Chinese Empire than has any other religious teacher.

Confucius held that man was born good, and that it was therefore always possible for him to remain so by resistance to the contaminations of the world. Man, according to him, was to work out his own salvation, unaffected by any supreme power. Thus, in his system of philosophy there was no Deity, no theory regarding death. He himself said to a disciple : "When we know so little about life, how can we know anything about death ?" He advised his followers to keep spiritual things at a distance. His teachings are good in so far that they taught the highest morality. Truth, sincerity, righteousness, and virtue were amongst the main themes of his philosophy.

While Confucianism was essentially of the earth and suited to the normal state of the Chinese mind, many of the precepts taught are quite on a level with Christian teaching. Thus we find that he exhorted his disciples "to do unto others as you would they should do unto you."

Laotzu, who lived at the same time as Confucius, brought into China another system of philosophy with so decided an Indian colouring that it is

impossible not to believe that he came from the far Western provinces of the Empire, and was not a Chinaman at all. Two quotations from *Confucianism and Taoism*, by Professor Douglas, will give some idea of the doctrine taught by this philosopher.

"His main object," says Professor Douglas, "was to explain to his followers the relations between the universe and that which he called Tao. The first meaning of this word is 'the way,' but in the teachings of Laotzu it was much more than that. It was the way of the waygoer. It was an eternal road; along it all beings and all things walked, but no being made it, for it is being itself; it was everything and nothing, and the cause and effect of all. All kings originated from Tao, conformed to Tao, and to Tao they at last returned." And again, Tao was "unconditioned being, which, as an abstraction too subtle for words, is the origin of heaven and earth, including God Himself; and, when capable of being expressed by name, is the mother of all kings."

Laotzu preached humility and peace, war was abhorrent to him, and consequently his philosophy did not meet with favour during his own time. So much did his teaching depend upon Laotzu that immediately after his death it became debased. His doctrine that life and death were but phases of the same existence encouraged people to devote

themselves solely to the pleasures of the present. Quickly following this the Taoists felt the needs of visible objects of worship ; they deified Laotzu, and gradually added new gods for special needs, until now Taoist temples are literally overflowing with gods. Thanks to a skilful playing upon the superstitions of the people Taoist priests reap a rich harvest, and there is never any lack of candidates for admission into the order, which is most powerful throughout the land. Laotzu himself would never recognise in present-day Taoism the effect of his preachings for humility and forgetfulness of self. Neither Confucianism nor Taoism enabled people to have any glimpse into the future, so that the advent of Buddhism from India supplied a felt want. After an unsuccessful attempt in 219 B.C. a Buddhist mission was established in China in 61 B.C. Despite the opposition of the philosophers of the two schools, the new religion soon gained many adherents amongst the Chinese people. The Buddhist priests, or rather monks, imitated the Taoists in professing to be adepts at magic, and thus made their calling very profitable.

The average Chinaman does not concern himself much with the five commandments of Buddha.

“ Thou shalt not kill.  
Thou shalt not steal.  
Thou shalt not commit any unchaste act.

Thou shalt not lie.

Thou shalt not drink any intoxicating liquor."

However, a large portion of the people believe in the transmigration of souls, though not too implicitly. Amongst the idols adorning Chinese temples the trinity of Buddhas is always given the first place.

That all their gods do not inspire the Chinese with reverence is shown by what happened at Foochow. The people, exasperated by a long drought, took a paper effigy of the god of sickness, placed it on a junk on the river and set fire to him.

While there are small numbers of both Mohammedans and Christians in China, neither of these religions can be said to influence the life of the country in any way.

From Foochow, in 1890, a lady missionary (Miss H. Woodhull) wrote what is probably the truest summing up of the real attitude of the Chinese people towards Christianity. She wrote:—

"I regard the masses of the Chinese as hating the Christian religion and foreigners as much as they have always done, and that the toleration which is exercised toward us is due to the fact that they have become convinced that we are harmless though misguided enthusiasts."

Professor Douglas then sums up the present state of religious feeling in China in the following extract from his *Society in China*:—

"The people, disregarding the distinctive features of the three creeds—Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism—take from each such tenets and rites as suit their immediate views and necessities, and superadding numerous superstitious observances, which have existed from before the time when Confucius and Laotzu were, have established a religious *pot-pourri* which happily satisfies all the needs of which they are conscious."

## CHAPTER V

### SOCIAL AND DOMESTIC LIFE

IN China there are many races of people. Of these the Chinese are the most important, but there are others who must not be forgotten. Among these are the Miautz, or aborigines of the southern provinces, the Manchus, the Mongols, and the Tibetans.

The Chinese men are of average European height and weight, but the women are disproportionately small. Their colour is a yellowish, sickly white, varying according to the exposure and the amount of heat endured. Chinese eyes are always black, as is also their hair. Their eyes appear to be oblique; this is owing mainly to the fact that the inner angles of the eyelids cannot open as wide as in the case of Western races.

The Chinese may be divided into four classes, if we exclude the officials and nobles. We give these in the order of estimation in which they are regarded by the Chinese. First in order come the *literati*.

The great examinations for obtaining official posts produce a far greater supply of graduates than even the Chinese Government can provide posts for. These graduates spend their lives in waiting for the official position which does not come, and it is beneath their dignity to take to trade. It was estimated recently that there were over twenty-one thousand unemployed graduates waiting for the impossible to happen. These men frequently usurp powers belonging only to officials, and very often the people meekly submit to this new and illegal imposition.

The unemployed literati of China have much in common with the poor whites of South Africa. There the children or grandchildren of Dutch farmers—whose land has been subdivided amongst the family until the several portions are too small to support the owner—might be seen in the towns, hanging around the street corners, idle, too proud to work, but not too proud to beg. In both cases there was much danger in their idleness; indeed, it may be said that many of the massacres in China have been initiated by these educated ne'er-do-weels.

After the literati come the *farmers*, who form the vast proportion of the Chinese nation. In China agriculture has always been held to be one of the highest possible callings. One of the earliest of Chinese books was an agricultural calendar, written

some seventeen centuries before the birth of Christ ! The farmers are worthy of the highest praise for the wonderful ways in which they wrest the full benefit from the soil. Nearly all of them however, suffer from the general maladministration of the laws. Hence in many cases their excessive poverty.

The extent of China being so great, there are naturally, owing to the differences of climate in the farm districts, many various products cultivated by the farmer. Rice, silk, opium, and tea are the best known and most important. Opium, smoked or eaten, is universally used. Where there has been so much discussion and so many accusations and counter-accusations it is difficult to express an opinion upon the merits or demerits of the question. With reference to the import of Indian opium into China, there are authorities who consider that Indian opium is better for the Chinese than is their own inferior variety of the drug. The evils of drunkenness in England would probably impress a Chinaman far more than the results of the opium habit are able to impress foreigners.

Tea is universally drunk throughout China, and there tea-houses are everywhere to be found. The export of tea to England grew from 4713 lb. in 1678 to 48,073,781 lb. in 1891. It must be stated, however, that Ceylon and Indian teas are doing great harm to the sale of China teas—more

so because of the carelessness of many Chinese planters, who have neglected their trees shamefully.

After the farmers come the *mechanics*, who are equally industrious and yet more poverty-stricken. They work incredibly long hours and still employ the old tools of their craft, abhorring any innovations and labour-saving appliances. A large proportion of the *mechanics* earn their living on the streets. Tailors, barbers, blacksmiths, all may be seen wandering about the streets waiting to be hired.

Last of all came the *merchants*, who however are those who have made China rich. The merchants of China have won everywhere the highest respect and admiration of all with whom they have come into contact. Their integrity and honesty are unimpeachable.

The trade guilds of China are the most powerful organisations, and generally succeed in obtaining any reforms which they wish; the mandarins dare not defy a whole trade throughout the Empire.

China may be said to be a country without doctors. There are many quacks, and most wonderful concoctions are administered to patients, but the art of medicine is not really practised. Surgery, the Chinese will have none of, because it is vital to pass from this world complete with every member of the body.

An interesting feature of Chinese life is the system

of village communities which exists throughout the Empire. In these communities the head of each household holds absolute sway over all its members ; the *patria potestas* is complete, life and death are in the hands of the paterfamilias. For the well-being of the community a hereditary headman is responsible, assisted by the elders of the village. These latter adjust many civil disputes occurring in their village, and sometimes even criminal cases never get further than their decision. This is illegal, but the law officials wink at methods which, however irregular, save much trouble and work.

The position allotted to Chinese women is essentially that of mothers of sons for the worship of the family ancestors and the good of the nation. In ancient days women used to receive an education much more full than is now the case. Of course, amongst the poorer classes, women do not receive any real education at all. Daughters cannot offer sacrifices to the family ancestors, because when married they pass into the husband's family. There is no joy in a Chinese household at the birth of a daughter. The correct average between sons and daughters in a family is held to be five to two. Infanticide is very common, and millions of Chinese girl children have been "married to the river spirits," in other words, drowned. The ever-increasing pressure of poverty is an added temptation to parents to dispose of the

surplus of female children. The present Manchu dynasty has done as much as was possible to stop the dreadful practices, but without marked success.

The Chinese girl first feels the disabilities of sex at the age of seven, for she is then separated from her brothers; and is expected to submit her feet to the bandaging process, which is in time to turn them into the "golden lilies," considered so desirable among all but the lowest classes. Indeed, even in the orphan schools established by both Catholic and Protestant missionaries, the Chinese girl children implore their kind friends to bandage their feet, for they are well aware that otherwise they will not be able to marry among their own class. What may be styled the little-foot custom, widespread though it be, does not obtain all over China. The Manchus, who are the sovereign race of China, have never bandaged the feet of their women; but although it is not unusual to see a Manchu marry a Chinese woman, it is extremely rare to see a Chinaman marry a Manchu lady.

On the whole, Chinese parents are very indulgent and kind to their children, especially until the latter attain the age of reason.

Where infanticide is not practised it is frequently only because it is found more profitable to sell

the female children into slavery — sometimes in the open market, sometimes not.

A Chinese proverb declares that marriage is the most important thing in life, and as soon as a Chinese girl has attained her twelfth year her parents begin to look out for a suitable *parti*, and once he is found a solemn betrothal takes place, which cannot be annulled without grave consequences to one or other of the two parties. The engagement often takes place some months before the marriage itself, and not infrequently children are informally affianced almost in their cradles. So important is the marriage question considered that post-mortem unions are very frequent. Astrology plays a certain part in marriage arrangements, and the astrologer also fixes the day and the hour which is considered propitious for the ceremony. The bridegroom never sees his betrothed until she is actually his wife; indeed, until she is at home. She is handed over to him closely veiled, and his first real sight of her is during the reception which follows the simple ceremony.

The only real requisite of a Chinese marriage would seem to be the delivery of the bride into the house of her husband—it is not necessary even that he should be there to receive her!

It frequently happens that a secondary wife

will be taken, though in her case there is but little ceremony at the wedding.

Although Confucian teachings contain no guidance as to what happens after death, the Chinese people have faith in an after life, in which there are modified versions of heaven and hell. As in olden days in Europe, the authors of Chinese religious works delight in expatiating upon the dreadful tortures which await the spirits of evil-doers. The funeral ceremonies are very elaborate; the period of mourning is supposed to be twenty-seven months, although this is frequently curtailed.

The Chinese have only one coin, which we know as cash, and which has a value of about one-tenth of a halfpenny, though this varies according to local conditions. The "cash" are made with square holes in their centre, in order to facilitate carriage. The difficulty of carrying a great sum in "cash" is considerable owing to its weight—a dollar's worth weighs nearly eight lb. To obviate the necessity of carrying such great loads, recourse is had to cast lumps of silver, the value of which are reckoned by weight; when smaller values are desired, broken silver is used. Even in the very old times the use of bank notes found place in China; in the British Museum there is one issued between 1368–1399.

Since there are always so many unemployed

members of society, in the form of literati and women, it is essential that some forms of amusements should exist. The Chinese take great delight in theatrical performances, and any excuse is good enough to make the engagement of a company necessary. Rain after excessive drought or the end of an epidemic, both need to be celebrated by a theatrical display. The whole village contributes to the expenses of the company, and the theatre is generally situated in the courtyard of one of the local temples. The plays continue for days together, which makes it necessary for every actor to give a full description of himself and his position when he appears upon the stage. The general effect of Chinese plays cannot be said to be beneficial to the audience.

But far more popular than the theatre, or than conjuring and gymnastic displays, is gambling. Really it would almost seem as if gambling were part of the Chinese nature rather than a mere amusement. Bets are laid on the most trivial incidents, and many itinerant sellers of food carry dice so that customers may be able to chance having their meal free, or may lose both meal and money.

*Fan-tan* is the great gambling game of China, and it may be found wherever there are Chinese. Its principle is very simple. The banker takes

a handful of "cash" from a bag and places them on the table; the players stake their money on one of four numbers—one, two, three, and four, usually indicated by four sides of a square. The banker removes the "cash" from the pile by fours and, the number left over, whether four, three, two, or one, determines the winners. This game, though simple, is intensely interesting, and players can lose large sums in a comparatively short time.

Cards are played by ladies, and generally in the dwelling-houses. The Chinese pack contains more cards than does an English one, and lends itself to an infinite variety of games.

As may be seen from this brief outline, the life of the majority of the Chinese people is a struggle with poverty from birth till death. Comforts they have none, and only their unparalleled industry enables them to live at all.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE CHINESE PRIDE OF RACE AND THEIR SYSTEM OF EXAMINATIONS

THE white races in their endeavours throughout the centuries to penetrate into China have always taken it for granted that the Chinese must be proud to be brought into contact with such highly civilised people, as the Western nations consider themselves to be. The Chinese were ranked with savages in this respect, and everyone knows that savages never have any pride of their own in order that they may at once be proud of the excellence of that civilisation which the white man knows it is his burden to spread.

The Chinese, however, are very far from being without pride. They possess a pride in their race and in their civilisation which forbids them to look upon other races as equals. The feeling inculcated into every Chinaman by the classics and by their system of examinations, which enforces a knowledge of those classics, is that the civilisation of China

has always been the highest possible, and that the "Barbarians" round about were inferior races. China was, when the others were not. The more of European history that is taught in China the more will this sense of superiority grow in strength in the hearts of the Chinese.

Those who seek to get nearer to the Chinese by adopting their customs and dress only earn for themselves a contemptuous pity, and help to confirm the Chinaman in the belief that his customs are superior to those of the white man—because, he says, does not this latter seek to adopt them, neglecting his own? The Chinese never adopt the habits of white men, however closely they may be associated with them. The pride of the Chinese would therefore appear to be greater than that of those nations who would thrust their civilisation upon them. A writer in the *Forum* of November 1899 gives the following as the results of his investigations:—

"Thirty years of more or less familiarity with California's Chinese of all degrees, from the merchant to the man who hires himself out as a domestic, has convinced me that they one and all look with contempt upon western achievements; and even when compelled to employ the conveniences created by the ingenuity of Americans and Europeans, they regard them either as a necessary evil or as something to be made use of in exploiting the people among whom they live."

In the *Missionary Herald* for September 1888, a

writer shows very clear insight into some of the causes of the pride which the Chinese feel in their race :—

“Such was her position and development among the surrounding kingdoms that China’s superiority soon became recognised, and she was an acknowledged teacher and leader among them. Her laws, culture, civilisation, and *Sacred Classics* became the model for the surrounding nations, and in some instances were adopted. This was especially true of her *Classics*.<sup>1</sup>”

“The inevitable effect of all this on the nation must not be overlooked. Proud of her attainments, proud of being a teacher of others, she became haughty, conceited, arrogant, self-contained, and self-satisfied. Her doors of exclusion and inclusion were barred as well as closed. She looked with contempt on the little ignorant kingdoms fringing her borders, and thought she had no superior in all the earth. Thus she settled down contented, to pamper her conceit, to nourish her prejudices, to stagnate, and to decay.”

To the Chinese the attempts of the Western Powers to impose conditions upon their Government must appear as impertinent as an attempt by the chief of an island in the South Seas to direct the policy of the British Empire would appear to us.

Even to this day no opportunity is lost of showing to the foreigners, the “foreign devils,” that they are not on a level with the Chinese, and are classed as barbarians. Till the year 1860, in fact, the same office which dealt with the barbarian races of Central Asia was considered quite competent to treat with the representatives of the Western

Powers. It is interesting to see what were the feelings of the Chinese with regard to the earliest British official mission (that of Lord Macartney) to Peking. From the following letter, addressed by the Emperor to George III., much information may be gained :—

“Your Majesty’s kingdom,” wrote the Emperor, “is at a remote distance beyond the seas, but is observant of its duties and obedient to our laws, beholding from afar the glory of our Empire, and respectfully admiring the perfection of our government. Your Majesty has despatched messengers with letters for our perusal: we find that they are dictated by appropriate sentiments of esteem and veneration; and being therefore inclined to fulfil the wishes of your Majesty, we have determined to accept the whole of the accompanying offering. With regard to those of your Majesty’s subjects who for a long course of years have been in the habit of trading with our Empire, we must observe to you that our Celestial Government regards all persons and nations with eyes of charity and benevolence, and always treats and considers your subjects with the utmost indulgence and affection; on their account, therefore, there can be no place or occasion for the exertions of your Majesty’s Government.”

Both Confucius and Mencius taught the Chinese



*Soldier inspecting one of the "Sacred Grottoes."*



to regard foreigners as inferiors rather than as equals. The former advised "indulgent treatment of men from a distance," while Mencius gave the following as his estimate of foreign nations:—

"I have heard of men using the doctrines of our great land to change barbarians, but I never yet heard of any being changed by barbarians. I have heard of birds leaving dark valleys to remove to lofty trees, but I have not heard of their descending from lofty trees to enter into dark valleys."

If it be the audience question or any other question between the Chinese and the foreigners which is examined, they all lead to the same conclusion: that the Chinese consider themselves the superiors of all other nations and treat them accordingly.

The pride of the Chinese might be taken to constitute a safeguard against any alliances between the Empire and other powers. Chinese history, however, shows us that occasionally they have made use of barbarians as allies, only to crush them later, after the desired effect is accomplished.

The system of examinations—introduced 178 A.D., by which the officials of China are largely selected—has much to do with keeping alive this pride of race. Whether the examination system is good or bad for the country we need not discuss,

certainly it does not seem to be disastrous. The most ancient rulers of China all taught the same lesson as did Confucius and all Chinese teachers, that of *harmony* in all relations. Whether between man and wife, neighbour and neighbour, official and farmer, harmony it was which was essential. To this teaching may largely be ascribed the stability and immutability of the Chinese nation.

The education of the Chinese begins at the age of six, and consists very largely of memorising. The training received in this way develops to a most amazing extent the retentive faculties of the Chinese.

The rules defining the instruction of children are contained in sixteen discourses of the Emperor Yong-Tching, called *The Holy Edict*. Some of them are interesting :<sup>1</sup>—

“All the efforts of education during the earliest age should tend to cultivate the attention, and fight against bad habits. Among the latter the Emperor instances—‘The habit of repeating with the lips, while the heart (mind) is fixed on something else.’ He advises that children should be taught not to be too easily satisfied, but to ask questions, so that they may acquire the wish to know.”

“Then the Emperor teaches parents what they should do to direct this education, to be obeyed by their children, and rule them wisely until the age when studies will begin to have an object.

“The first thought that should occupy a student’s mind is this, ‘To form a resolution.’ It is admitted that when a resolution is firmly made, the desired end will be attained.

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<sup>1</sup> *The Chinese Painted by Themselves*, by Col. Tcheng-ki-Tong.

"I know no principle more efficacious than this, to make success in studies depend on the will alone, joined to perseverance; such principles not only direct the efforts but prepare the character.

"The advice we are to follow possesses also great value, from the point of view of study in itself, and I offer it to the attention of all students who desire to attain success with certainty:—

"To analyse the work done every day.

"To repeat every ten or twenty days what has previously been acquired.

"To begin study at five o'clock in the morning, and give as much attention to it as a general gives to the operations of his army.

"Not upon any pretext to cease study for five or six days.

"Not to fear being slow, but only to fear stopping. And finally, one last warning—

"Time passes with the swiftness of an arrow; a month is gone in a twinkling, another follows it, and presently the year is finished."

The subjects in which students are examined are practically confined to classical literature and history. Occasionally mathematical questions creep in, but only very seldom.

The following are the books upon which the examinations are based:—

*The Conversations of Confucius*, which contain much of the Confucian teachings in a form similar to the gospel narratives; *The Great Learning* and *The Doctrine of the Mean*, also embodying the teachings of Confucius; *The Book of Changes*, which is the oldest book in China, and partakes more of

the nature of a treatise on divination; *Mencius*, containing the conversations of that sage; *The Book of Odes*, consisting of a collection of ancient national ballads; *The Book of History*, edited by Confucius; *The Spring and Autumn Annals*, a history by Confucius of his native state of Lu; and *The Book of Rites*, compiled in the twelfth century B.C., and still the authority on matters of ceremony and etiquette.

The examinations are open to nearly all the Chinese people (only children of actors and a few special classes are debarred), and thus the system cannot be said to be any test as to the character of the graduates, however much it may testify to their industry.

The first examination is held before the magistrate of the district, and those successful in it go at once before the Prefect to undergo a second examination, lasting five days. The successful candidates have the title of *Suit'sai*, which corresponds to our degree of Bachelor of Arts. It must be added that so insufficient is the number of the posts to be awarded that only very few *Suit'sai* ever obtain any official position.

Every three years there are held provincial examinations, at which those successful at the local tests compete. Success in this entitles a student to be called *Chujen*. In these examina-

tions the students are confined in cells during two days. The cells are 4 feet wide,  $5\frac{1}{2}$  feet deep, and 6 feet high; from them the student may not stir until the two days of examination are over. This system is adopted to make certain that no outside assistance is given to the students. Despite all the precautions taken, much is done contrary to the rules; in many cases poor graduates impersonate the student and render his success more certain. There are three examinations of two days each, with intervals of one day.

The successful candidates travel to Peking, where they are examined for the degree of *Tsin-shih*. There are generally about six thousand competitors, and the average of graduates is only five per cent. From the successful amongst this small remnant four are chosen, who receive titles equivalent to our Senior Wrangler, are presented to the Emperor, and receive high official positions.

While there are so many unemployed *literati* in the country it seems strange that there should be such eagerness to pass the examinations. So anxious are many that they assist their ignorance with judicious corruption; indeed, the system is honeycombed with dishonest practices.

There are also military examinations, but they are very easy, as far as the literary portion is concerned. The practical part of the examination

for officers is archery on foot and on horse, and lifting heavy weights.

China is fortunate in possessing a very fine code of laws, but this good fortune avails little, the course of justice being continually perverted, owing to the necessity for officials to obtain the wherewithal to live. It is not only in China that good laws are useless owing to the fact that they are not enforced. This lack of justice, and corruption of officials, comes very heavily upon the poor in China, and the bulk of the Chinese are poor.

## CHAPTER VII

### CHINESE DYNASTIES

THE dynasties of China come and go without producing any appreciable change in the life and customs of the nation. Even when new dynasties of a different and distinct race have been installed, the power of immutability possessed by the Chinese people has engulfed them, and they have conformed to the customs of their conquered subjects. It would be curious to observe how far this process would continue if the white races established dominion over China. Would they have to bow before the customs of centuries and do as do the Chinese? This ability to bring even foreign dynasties into line with their ancient civilisation, has naturally not at all lessened the pride of the Chinese in their race.

All Chinese dynasties have practically the same history. The early rulers are virtuous, strong, and capable men, who do much good to the country; their successors, however, gradually drift from the

path of virtue, which, Confucius teaches, is necessary to a ruler of people. Finally, after the dynasty has existed for a varying number of years, the last ruler is deposed or killed, and the new dynasty comes into power. Then for a period reforms are prosecuted energetically, and frequently military expeditions are despatched to clear the frontiers of barbarian tribes. After this period the reforms decrease persistently and the abuses grow apace. It has, however, seldom been the people, those who feel the abuses, who have risen against their rulers; it has nearly always been some neighbouring chief, or perchance some high dignitary at Court. It is only in the later centuries that popular risings have taken place, and they have seldom resulted in change of dynasty.

After the Age of the Five Rulers, from 2852 to 2255 B.C., there came the rulers of the Hia dynasty, who reigned from 2205 to 1766 B.C. The great Yu or Yao was the first of his dynasty, and is still held in great reverence for the excellence of his government. The sixteen rulers who succeeded him gradually sank into insignificance, and in 1766 B.C. T'ang founded the Shang dynasty, which lasted until 1121 B.C., and of which there were twenty-nine rulers. Chow Sin, the last ruler, was not only an incapable emperor but also a very debased one, and Wu (the warlike prince) raised a

rebellion against him, seizing the throne and founding the Chow dynasty (1122 to 255 B.C.).

Before the end of the reigns of the thirty-eight rulers of this dynasty all the goodness of the early Emperor had vanished, and abuses were very rife. It must be remembered that, at this time, the country was divided into many states, each with a sovereign, and owing allegiance to the Emperor only so far as his might could enforce it. In 255 B.C. the chief of one of these states made war on the imperial state and assumed the supreme power. He founded the T'sin dynasty, 255 to 206 B.C. Amongst the six rulers of this dynasty Shih Hwang-ti was the only one of importance. He, having proclaimed himself universal sovereign, was much displeased at the opposition of the *literati*, and ordered the destruction of all books; many *literati* died in their attempts to prevent this decree, but in vain. This Emperor began the building of the Great Wall of China as a defence against the inroads of the Tartars in the north. He also constructed many fine roads and bridges; all this in a reign of three years.

Following him came the Han dynasty, 206 B.C. to 25 A.D., with fifteen rulers. This dynasty is the most celebrated of any, and the Chinese to this day delight to be the "Sons of Han." Kau Ti, the first ruler, continued the title of Universal Monarch but

restored the literature destroyed by his predecessor. So thoroughly was this done that, in place of no literature in 206 B.C., there were two in 1 A.D.: 3123 works on classics, 2705 on philosophy, and 1383 on poetry. During this dynasty, Buddhism was introduced into China, and the Chinese armies wandered as far as the Caspian Sea; Cochin-China and the Liaotung Peninsula were also conquered. In the After Han dynasty, 25 A.D. to 190 A.D., there were twelve rulers.

Following this halcyon period in Chinese history came a time of bitter internecine strife between the rulers over the States of Shuh, Wei, and Wu. This strife was brought to a close by the establishment of the Western and Eastern T'sin dynasties, which lasted from 265 A.D. to 419 A.D. In the one hundred and sixty years after 419 A.D. there were endless struggles between six states for mastery, and the Sung, T'si, Liang, Chen, and Sui dynasties held sway. In the last named the reign of Yang Ti occurred, a ruler to whom China owes much of her elaborate system of canals.

The Tang dynasty, 618 to 907 A.D., with its twenty-three rulers, covers a period which may well be called the Augustan age of Chinese literature. This was marked by a strong stand made by the followers of Confucian teachings against the spread of Buddhism. The only ruler of note was the

Empress Wu, who usurped the throne and ruled in peace for twenty years. After this dynasty followed shorter ones until the Sung dynasty in 960 A.D. The rulers of this dynasty were continually struggling against overwhelming foes, principally the Mongols under Jenghiz Khan and his successors.

Jenghiz Khan it was who conquered Moscow and Kiev before possessing himself of the northern portion of China. To his grandson Kublai was it left to conquer China, and to place himself on the Chinese throne in 1276 A.D. About this great leader we hear much, thanks to the narrative of Marco Polo, a Venetian who spent many years at the Court of the Mongols. Kublai encountered much resistance from the Chinese during his progress, but overcame every obstacle, overrunning the land till he conquered Burma. He despatched two great expeditions against the Japanese, but they were unsuccessful, as many as 100,000 soldiers being lost in the second attempt. Kublai was very tolerant of all religions, though his leanings were toward Buddhism. In the south of China the incursion of the Mongols had been much more resented than in the north, and there rose up an able leader in Chu, by whose aid the Chinese were able to drive out the Mongols under one of Kublai's successors. Chu founded the Ming

dynasty, taking as his title, Hung-wu. Peking, which had been the Mongol capital, was adopted by the Mings as the seat of the Chinese Government. Hung-wu codified the laws of China, and also founded the famous Han-lin College, membership of which was only granted to the highest scholars. During this dynasty wars with Tartars were continual, and the Japanese descended upon the coasts in the fashion of the Vikings in Europe. The Ming dynasty really gave place to the Ts'ing in 1563, though there were still Ming sovereigns in the south of China until 1628.

The Ts'ing dynasty is the present reigning house, and is Manchu not Chinese. During the Ming dynasty the Manchus had consolidated their power under Nurhachu, and in 1618 crossed the frontiers of China. The Chinese were characteristically unprepared, and the Manchus, though numerically much inferior, pursued the war with varying success. The occupation of Peking by Chinese rebels necessitated the calling in of the Manchus to aid the Chinese armies, and in 1644 a Manchu ruler ascended the Chinese throne at Peking. The adherents of the Mings fought vainly for many years in the south, but had no competent leaders. Kang-hi, one of the greatest of the rulers of China successfully quelled rebellions in the south, west, and north, and also conquered Formosa. As in the British

Empire there is always some war going on, so it was in the Chinese Empire of that day. The Tartars and the Russians advanced upon China but were defeated, and Kang-hi made a treaty with the Russians, fixing the limits of their advance southward. The Tartars were defeated again and again, and finally quieted in 1721, the year in which Kang-hi celebrated his diamond jubilee. His successor, Yung-Ching, made the great mistake of withdrawing his troops within his frontiers instead of maintaining an aggressive defence. This ruler was very much opposed to missionaries.

Following him came K'ien-Ling, who was a most capable man. He conquered Eastern Turkestan, reduced Burma to a tributary state, crushed the Miautz (aboriginal tribes) in Western and South-Western China, pacified Formosa with fire and sword, and carried through successful wars with the Mongols and with the Gurkhas of Nepal, who had invaded Tibet. During his reign Lord Macartney came on a mission of peace and goodwill from the British Government (see Chap. IX.).

Kiaking, who succeeded Kien-Ling, was a very degenerate ruler, and only resembled him in his hatred of the foreigners. Owing to his weakness, much trouble was experienced with risings insti-

gated by secret societies, principally in the south. Lord Amherst's mission arrived during this reign (*vide* Chap. IX.).

Under Tau-kwang, who succeeded in 1820, the foreigners were in no better position than under the other rulers of this dynasty. So acute did the relations between Tau-kwang and the British become that the first China war resulted (*see* Chap. IX.). The penalties attendant upon this war were not calculated to encourage a love of the foreigner in the heart of the Chinese Emperor. The secret societies again gave much trouble, and there arose one Hung Hsuits'uan, who preached a divine mission, and assumed the title of "The Heavenly King." His followers were called the T'aip'ings, and he led them with such success that Nanking, the ancient capital of China, fell into his hands after a slaughter of some 20,000 Manchu soldiers. In 1853 the T'aip'ings set out on a march to Peking, and reached Tientsin, mainly, it must be confessed, owing to the incompetence of the imperial troops.

It is in connection with this march that Li Hung Chang first appears upon the stage of Chinese history. He raised a regiment to oppose the T'aip'ings, and thus was brought in prominence and favour. The T'aip'ings were unable to capture Tientsin, and were beaten and dispersed.

The reign of Hien-Fung, who succeeded in 1851, was marked by the second China war and the war of 1860 (*see Chap. IX.*), both of which arose largely from his intensely anti-foreign sentiment. In consequence of the war the Emperor spent much of his reign at Jehol in Mongolia, the actual government being carried on by Prince Kung. On the death of Hien-Fung, in 1861, his son of four succeeded him. Unfortunately, the minority of the ruler vested vast powers in the Council, which was bitterly anti-foreign.

Thanks to these wars between the Chinese and the white races the T'aip'ing rebels had recovered strength, and under the successful leadership of Chung-Wang the T'aip'ings captured towns and defeated imperial armies.

The Chinese Government employed two Americans, Ward and Burgerine, to organise an army to crush the rebellion. These raised a force, known as the "Ever Victorious Army," in which many whites served, attracted by the prospect of loot. This was plentiful, and the army met with fair success until the death of Ward, when Li Hung Chang, then governor of the province, quarrelled with Burgerine. The Chinese Government appointed Major Charles George Gordon (the hero of Khartum) in supreme command of the "Ever Victorious Army." The position was a most difficult one, and the record

of his successful leadership reflects the greatest credit upon Major Gordon. His campaign culminated in the capture of the city of Soo-chow. Li Hung Chang treacherously killed the T'aip'ing chiefs, who had surrendered under Gordon's promise of a safe-conduct, and Major Gordon resigned his command. He resumed it, however, on hearing that Burgerine had joined the T'aip'ings, and finally Nanking was taken, and the rebellion was ended. The "Ever Victorious Army" was disbanded, though there was much work for it ready at hand. The whole 107,000 square miles of the province of Yunnan were in a ferment; and consequent upon Mohammedan revolts there, and the stern repressive measures of the Chinese, the Yunnan has never recovered its old prosperity. In Central Asia rebellions had broken out, but they were crushed deliberately and completely, after the manner of the Chinese.

After the war of 1860 the office of the Tsung-li-Yamen was brought into existence, to meet the need of dealing with the foreign nations.

In 1872 Tung-Chih ascended the throne, and reigned for three years. During these years serious trouble arose with Japan with reference to some claims in Formosa, war being only averted by the action of Sir Thomas Wade, British Minister at Peking.



*English Detachment marching through the Audience Hall of the Emperor's Palace, where no white man had been before.*

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On the death of Tung-Chih, the Dowager Empresses chose as successor Kwang-Su, the son of Prince Chang, putting aside the claims of the son of Prince Kung. Kwang-Su, who is the present Emperor, has never been very self-assertive, even after his coming of age in 1889. In 1881 trouble arose between China and Japan in Korea, and an arrangement for the withdrawal of the forces of both nations was arrived at. Several far-seeing Chinese pointed out the dangers likely to result to China from the rapid development of Japan, but no action was taken in the Celestial Empire. Meanwhile, the French were causing trouble in Annam. The Chinese, with their customary desire for peace, offered to treat with them, and had in fact arranged terms, when a conflict arose by mistake between the confronting forces. There followed a war, during which the diplomatic relations were not broken off. The French fleet destroyed the inferior and badly armed Chinese men-of-war at Foochow, and Sir Robert Hart was called in to arrange terms of peace. By these France obtained a colony, and China was rid of an encumbrance.

Following this came more trouble in Korea, and the Japanese occupied Chemulpo. However, the matter was settled peaceably. China then bestirred herself and bought men-of-war, guns, and munitions

of war. No great steps were taken, however, to train the soldiers on modern lines.

In 1894 the Chinese violated their agreement with Japan as to Korea, and hostilities began by the memorable incident of the sinking by Japanese cruisers of the transport *Kowshing*, laden with Chinese soldiers. In the war that followed the untrained Chinese had no chance against the Japanese, who swept through Korea, captured Port-Arthur and Wei-hai-Wei, and destroyed the Chinese fleets. Negotiations ensued, and Li Hung Chang again appeared as commissioner for China. The terms of peace were, that Japan should receive Formosa, the Pescadores, and the Liaotung Peninsula, with Port Arthur, besides an indemnity of 200,000,000 taels. Russia, Germany, and France however intervened and prevented the cession of the Liaotung Peninsula. Since the war China has relapsed into her former state of indifference to foreign ideas and invention, though the grabbing policy of the various Powers has probably been the cause of much contemptuous amusement to the yellow man.

With regard to recent events, there is no need to say anything. The power of the Empress Dowager grew steadily more important, until finally the Emperor ceased to have even the semblance of power which formerly appertained to him. Of the rising of

the Boxers and the actions of the Imperial Chinese Government, no opinion can be expressed until the true facts are known, and until time allows the historian to gain that perspective so necessary for true history.

## CHAPTER VIII

### FOREIGN INTERCOURSE WITH CHINA

AS early as the second century after Christ an embassy was sent to China by Marcus Aurelius from Rome, and during the reign of the Tang dynasty, 618–907 A.D., embassies arrived from Persia, Nepal, and the See of Rome. The kings of Cochin-China and Korea sent ambassadors to the Court of the Chinese Emperor in 1122 A.D. None of these advances from outside nations were welcomed sufficiently to encourage further intercourse with China.

In 1245–47 A.D., during the reign of Jenghiz Khan, the great Mongol chief, Catholic missionaries arrived at the Mongol Court, and were not maltreated. It is from Marco Polo, a Venetian merchant, that most is learned about China in those days. Marco Polo arrived at Kublai's Court (Kublai was Jenghiz Khan's grandson) with his father and uncle in 1271. The Venetians were wonderstruck at the magnificence and oriental

splendour of the Court. Kublai Khan welcomed them cordially, and took a great fancy to Marco Polo. The latter lived in China for sixteen years, during this time holding many high offices of State. So well did the Khan like him that he would scarcely permit him to return to Venice. However, in 1295, Marco Polo and his relations again reached Italy. His description of the Chinese civilisation was ridiculed, but has been verified by time. A priest, John de Monte Corvino, also visited China about this period, and remained, at Kublai Khan's invitation, until his death in 1328.

The first attempts at trade between Europe and China took place in 1511, when several Portuguese traders arrived off the south coast. Six years later another expedition arrived, under Señor d'Andrade, who visited Canton and later Peking, where he resided for some time as a sort of unofficial ambassador, keeping an eye upon the interests of his fellow-countrymen. The relations between the Portuguese and Chinese were fairly good until a second Portuguese fleet appeared off the Chinese coasts and took to piracy. This so enraged the Chinese that d'Andrade was seized, thrown into prison, and later, in 1523, executed.

Macao was founded in 1560, but even here the Portuguese traders held but a precarious foothold, due chiefly to their superior weapons of defence.

A curious refutation of the theory, that the Chinese regard all foreign religions with a violent hatred, is found in the fact that for a considerable time a Jesuit priest and his successors held positions of trust and influence at the Chinese Court. Probably China was never nearer being Christianised than in the century following 1600 A.D. And it is interesting to note that all the success obtained by Ricci, Schall, and Verbiest, the Jesuit priests, was due to the fact that they were men of the highest education, and that they were ready to adapt their teaching to fit the special case of China. Thus the Jesuits allowed the study of Confucian philosophy and the worship of ancestors, saying that they were political and civil customs, not religious. This opinion was supported by an edict of the Emperor Kang - Hsi, who was very well-disposed towards all religions and religious teachers.

François Xavier died before he reached China, but in 1600 Matteo Ricci, a Jesuit priest, reached Peking after working in the south since 1582. On his way north from Macao he was imprisoned for six months, but in Peking he was well received. His learning and intimate knowledge of Chinese enabled him to take up a position amongst the students, and to write books, one of which in later years was included in the hundred best books of China. Ricci died at the age of fifty-eight, in 1610.

A suitable successor was found in Father Longobardi.

In the early days of the Tartar rule in China, the Jesuits held a high position. This was chiefly due to the abilities of Johann Adam Schall, who reached Peking in 1631, specially invited by the last Emperor of the Ming dynasty because of the fame of his learning. He was installed as Court astronomer, and accomplished the work of revising the calendar. This success caused much jealousy amongst the Chinese scientists, but they were powerless to touch Schall's position. When the Tartars were threatening the Empire, Schall was forced to start a cannon foundry, much against his will. Wonderful to relate, Schall remained as high in favour under the new Tartar dynasty as he had been under the Mings. The quarrels of the Dominicans and Franciscans, who envied the Jesuits their power, brought trouble upon the head of Schall and of his disciples. This most able and learned man died in disgrace in 1669, and his disciples were scattered throughout the land.

Following him came Father Verbiest, who had the awful experience of spending six years in a Chinese prison. When, however, Kang-Hsi gained his majority Verbiest was released, because of his knowledge of astronomy and kindred sciences. He also was forced to cast cannon. By engraving

images of saints on the breeches Verbiest was in the habit of consecrating each piece of ordnance. For this method of making the best of a necessity he was praised by the Pope. Verbiest was the maker of the bronze mathematical instruments which still exist in Peking, and which are the admiration of present-day visitors. He died in 1688.

The Dominicans, envious of the Jesuits, sent missionaries to China. They insisted upon the giving up by the Chinese of Confucianism and of ancestral worship. This brought dissension into the ranks of the Christians and trouble into their dealings with the Chinese.

That Kang-Hsi was not inimical to the Christian religion may be judged by the following edict:—

“As we do not restrain the Lamas of Tartary or the bonzes of China from building temples and burning incense, we cannot refuse these having their own churches and publicly teaching their religion, especially as nothing has been alleged against it as contrary to law. Were we not to do this we should contradict ourselves. We hold, therefore, that they may build temples to the Lord of Heaven, and maintain them wherever they will; and that those who honour them may freely resort to them to burn incense and to observe the rites usual to Christianity.”

So enraged, however, did Kang-Hsi become at the support of the Dominicans by the Pope that

<sup>1</sup> *China*, by Professor Douglas, p. 105.

he ordered the persecution of these missionaries and the protection of the Jesuits. His son, Yung Cheng, encouraged the persecution of all missionaries, and the time of the Jesuit power was over. For some considerable time, however, thanks to their methods of incorporating existing institutions, there was a great chance that Christianity in China might rank at least equally with the present great religions.

Mr. A. B. Mitford, in the preface to his excellent book, *The Attaché at Peking*, writes on the subject of missionary enterprise in China :—

“If missionaries are to be successful, it must be by the power of masterly talent and knowledge. They can only work on any scale through the lettered class, and in order to dominate them must be able to give proof of superior attainments, as the old Jesuits did.”

And again—

“Above all things an accurate and scholarly knowledge of the language is necessary. There have been not a few excellent scholars among our missionaries. But there are many more whose ignorance in that respect has been fatal, covering themselves and the religion which they preach with ridicule. Fancy a Chinese Buddhist mounting on the roof of a hansom cab at Charing Cross and preaching Buddhism to the mob in pidgin English! That would give some measure of the effect produced on a Chinese crowd by a missionary whom I have seen perched upon a cart outside the great gate of the Tartar city at Peking, haranguing a yellow crowd of gapers in bastard Chinese, delivered with a strong Aberdonian accent. The Jesuits knew better than that.”

This writer does not believe that the bulk of the

Chinese people hate Christianity, rather than they regard it with apathy. The mandarins and *literati*, however, are united in violent opposition to the teaching of a creed which seems to them to involve too radical a change in present circumstances. They regard the missionaries very much as does Lord Salisbury, and unfortunately their past experience has but served to deepen their belief in this opinion. Buddhism and, to a minor degree, Mohammedanism, came into the country from the outside, and were received with nothing approaching to the opposition which has met the Christian missionaries. These other religions sought for no temporal power, and were not backed by powerful nations.

If this idea be true, it would seem that the many unfortunate massacres of missionaries which have taken place in China, aimed rather at the defeat of the temporal power sought by the Christian religion, than at the religious teaching of the missionaries. It has been seen how the Jesuits succeeded, so long as they were content to cut themselves loose from their temporal power, and work amongst the Chinese simply as learned men. It would be well for missionaries going to China to read Mr. Mitford's preface, and fit themselves to be real workers for the advancement of their religion, rather than objects of contemptuous ridicule to the Chinese.

It would be impossible to give accounts of all the massacres of missionaries that have taken place in China, but it is safe to say that, without exception, they have not arisen from any hatred of the missionaries personally. They are rather the results of the efforts of the mandarins and *literati* who, anxious for their positions, stirred up the ignorant people, by imaginary stories of diabolical cruelty, to attack the foreigners. How easy a task this is may be imagined from the ease with which, for example, European mobs are excited and led on to the murder of unoffending Jews. It is well to remember our own faults while judging the Chinese for their massacres of innocent men and women.

In Yang-chow, in Tientsin, and in the Fuhkien Province, not to mention other places, there have been massacres at various times, involving the death of a greater or less number of white missionaries and native converts. Sad and deplorable as are these incidents, the student of *China and Her Mysteries* must be careful to remember that they are only incidents, and he must not magnify them to the rank of great historical occurrences.

The dealings of the various European Powers with China have been uniformly discouraged by the Chinese, who have occasionally, it must be confessed, had plenty of excuse for the attitude of hostility which they have taken up. The Portuguese, in

particular, behaved so shamefully that the Chinese, regarding them simply as pirates and adventurers, never paid any serious heed to their claims to be treated as equals. The Spaniards followed the Portuguese, and occupied the Philippine Islands. Here they were soon alarmed at the crowds of Chinese emigrants, and adopted most cruel repressive measures. Many thousands of Chinese were massacred by the comparatively small body of Spanish settlers in the islands, and the unfortunate yellow men were hunted and harried without mercy. Such action on the part of the Spaniards, and the reprisals on the Spanish missionaries in the Fuh-kien province, naturally put a stop to any cordial relations which might otherwise have come about between Spain and China.

The Dutch sent an embassy to the Manchu Court in 1656 at the same time as did the Russians. These were the first European embassies to reach China. The Dutchmen, anxious to obtain trading concessions, agreed to kowtow to the Emperor, which action the Russians wisely refused to perform. The Dutch ambassador received nothing, was hustled from the palace, and even now his embassy is remembered with ridicule. The Russian envoy also received nothing, but was treated with more respect than his fellow-ambassador.

The Portuguese refused to allow the Dutch to

settle in Southern China, and the latter accordingly crossed to the island of Formosa, where they established a colony.

With Russia, China has always had better relations than with any of the other powers. Mr. Boulger, in his *Short History of China*, thinks that "this is explained partly by the fact of neighbourhood, and partly by Russia seeking only her own ends, and not advantages for the benefit of every other foreign nation." In 1689, after the defeat of the Russians in their advance upon China from the north, the Emperor Kang Hsi concluded a treaty with them at Nertchinsk. This treaty was the first convention concluded between China and a European Power, and in it the limits of Russian advance southward were set forth. The relations between the two Empires have always been more cordial than might have been expected, and, even during the second foreign war, friendly relations were maintained between Russia and China. It is probable that the Chinese recognise in the Russians a race more nearly like themselves, in their singleness of purpose and the immutability of their preconceived plans. The Russians have shown the greatest good sense in their dealings with the Chinese Government, and none of their ambassadors has ever degraded himself by kowtowing to the Emperor. In 1805, indeed, a Russian embassy retraced its steps to

Russia when, on reaching the Great Wall, the ambassador was informed that he would have to kowtow to the Emperor.

As early as 1727 a treaty between China and Russia, or rather a revision of the Nertchinsk Treaty, contained provisions for the establishment of a Russian College at Peking, where students studied the Chinese and Manchu languages. In some way or another relations have always been maintained between the Empires, even during the reigns of the most anti-foreign Emperors at Peking.

The successes of Frenchmen in China have lain more in the realm of literature than of trade or warlike conquest. It is largely due to the earlier French missionaries that the world now knows so much about China and China's history.

In Annam, in the south, the French established themselves at Saigon in 1858. After the Franco-German War of 1870, this city was used as a base for expeditions, whose object was to acquire influence over the neighbouring province of Tonking. The Tonkingese reported this action of the French to the Chinese Emperor, who endeavoured to prevent an outbreak of war. Li Hung Chang was appointed as representative of the Emperor, but his recommendations were rejected both in Pekin and in Paris. In 1884 the French became more aggressive, and although terms of settlement were almost

arranged, fighting broke out. The French were completely defeated, thanks to the tactics of the Chinese troops, who had the assistance of German instructors. These latter hurled bodies of untrained men, armed only with obsolete weapons, upon the French troops, causing them to exhaust their ammunition. Then the trained Chinese soldiers, armed with rifles, came into action and overcame the ammunitionless French. In 1885 war broke out in earnest; the Chinese fleet was destroyed at Foochow, and the Pescadores were occupied by the French fleet. In Tonking, however, a guerilla war did not bring any glory to the French troops. Thanks to Sir Robert Hart, a treaty was signed in June 1885 by Li Hung Chang and the French Minister at Peking, by which a portion of the territory in question was ceded to France.

Germany has not had many relations with China until comparatively recent years. Germany it is who initiated the policy of grab in the Far East, and there are many who predict that she will insist upon having Shantung Province as a sphere of influence. Such action on her part, they think, would be but a prelude to attacks upon British interests in the Yang-tse-kiang Valley.

Between Japan and China there have been constant struggles, ever since the first descent of Japanese pirates upon the Chinese coasts. The

Chinese have never been able to claim conclusive victories over the Japanese, while, on the sea, they have invariably been hopelessly outmatched.

The question of the reception of the Foreign Ministers at Peking by the Emperor, and of the performance of the kowtow has been a continual bone of contention between China and Europe. Lord Macartney, in 1793, was received by the Emperor of China at Jehol in Mongolia, and presented his credentials, bending upon one knee, into the imperial hands.

In 1873, when the Emperor Tungchi gained his majority, the Tsung-li-Yamen was forced to consider how the Foreign Ministers should be received in audience. The latter refused even to bend the knee, and the Chinese therefore decided that they should not be allowed within the imperial city, but should be received in the pavilion outside the gates of the palaces, where envoys of superior tributary states were received. Here the Ministers of England, France, America, Russia, and Holland, and the ambassador of Japan were received by the Emperor. In 1891 the Ministers were again received in the same hall. These receptions did not add at all to the dignity of the Ministers nor of their countries; it would have been better far if they had refused to be received under such conditions.

After the Japanese-Chinese War the Ministers were received in the palace, as were also their wives.

The latter ceremony was a great mistake, and did incredible harm to any small amount of respect which the Chinese might have acquired for the representatives of the foreign nations. The fact that foreign women should be so anxious to be received by the Chinese Empress was taken as another recognition of Chinese superiority. The ceremony itself afforded much amusement to the Chinese, and not much pleasure to the ladies themselves.

There has been too much imploring for audiences by the European representatives ; it would be better for credentials never to be presented, than that the ceremony of presentation should partake of the nature of a giving homage to China.

## CHAPTER IX

### GREAT BRITAIN AND CHINA

COMMERCIAL relations between Great Britain and China have existed for nearly three hundred years, and now the trade has reached an annual value of £12,000,000. Through all these years it would be difficult for anyone to point to a wise and continuous diplomacy on the part of Great Britain. Wise *actions* there have been, no doubt, but they were always preceded and followed by so many follies, that they lose the particular value belonging to themselves. The whole story of the dealings between Britain and China presents a pitiable display of incapacity on the part of our countrymen. Not only have unwise actions been perpetrated, but it would almost seem as if the British had felt bound to go out of their way to lower themselves in the eyes of the Chinese. So persistently has this course of self-abnegation been carried out that it is small wonder that the Chinese feel that they have not to do with an equal but with

an inferior race. This is a mortifying discovery for any Englishman to make, and yet it must be realised, and the knowledge must bring change of plans before anything of real value can be effected in our relations with China.

The morbid dread of offending China early became a mania. Now we have reached a state of action of which it has been said that "Britain in China has no policy, but only a prejudice." For it seems as though British statesmen consider it first necessary to set two other nations by the ears before proceeding to deal with the Chinese Government. Professor Douglas, writing on British policy in China, says:—

"In the relations between ourselves and the mandarins we have in all cases been the suppliant, and they the dispensers of privileges. Their haughty attitude of stand-offwardness has in these circumstances had its effect, and our communications with them have been too often marked by undue deference. The attitude of our Government towards Li Hung Chang during his recent visit to this country was an instance in point. Neither his official position nor his private character entitled him in any way to the adulation which was shown him, and which he, after the manner of the Oriental, repaid by acts of grave discourtesy. Nevertheless, these last were entirely overlooked by a mistaken consideration, and he doubtless left our shores satisfied that his countrymen are correct when they hold that we are but hangers-on to the imperial bounty of the "Son of Heaven" and his ministers.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *China*, p. 378.

One of the worst instances of this foolish policy is that which occurred after the occupation of Burma in 1886. Burma was a tributary state of China, and, for fear of hurting Chinese feelings, the British continued for some time to forward the tribute to Peking. By this they placed themselves directly in the position of tributary chiefs, an even lower position than they formerly held in Chinese minds. The effect upon our relations with China may well be imagined.

It was in the reign of Queen Elizabeth that the first British expedition left England to trade with China. The four small ships composing it, however, came no nearer than the West Indies. Four years later a charter was granted to a company of merchants, empowering them to trade with China and the neighbouring states. James I. and Oliver Cromwell also granted trading charters.

In 1635 Captain Weddell arrived at Macao with a few ships and a letter of recommendation from the Portuguese Governor of Goa. This served him in bad stead, the Portuguese having behaved so badly to the Chinese that they looked with distrust on anything or anybody with Portuguese recommendation. Weddell sailed up the Canton River, and, being fired upon by the Chinese from the Bogue Forts, landed his men and captured the forts. Though no trade resulted from Weddell's

expedition he was the first white traveller to reach Canton.

Little was done in the way of developing trade until the accession of the Manchu dynasty, when, in 1664, factories were opened at Amoy, and the exportation of tea began. (*Té* is the southern name for tea in China, and *Chi*, the northern; thus the Russians who come to China from the north use the word *chi*, while we call it *tea*.) The merchants had to labour against great disadvantages, and were practically confined to their factories, under the strictest regulations until the Treaty in 1842.

In 1792 Lord Macartney arrived in China on a mission of peace and goodwill to the Emperor. He was very well received, and was personally quite charmed with his treatment. In reality, however, the Chinese treated him only as an ambassador from a superior tributary state. When ascending the Peiho River Lord Macartney's ship bore a flag, with the inscription, in Chinese characters, "Tribute bearer from the country of England." The Chinese Emperor not being at Peking, the mission proceeded to his hunting palace at Jehol in Mongolia. Lord Macartney refused to kowtow to the Emperor, and after prolonged discussion was permitted simply to kneel, as before his own monarch. The mission was not at all successful, the only result being an assur-

ance that British merchants might trade, though under sufferance, as before.

In 1814 an educated Englishman, named Manning, arrived in Canton. He was acquainted with the Chinese language, and hoped for employment under the Government. He was, however, disappointed, and travelled into Tibet, where he was allowed to enter the sacred city of Lhasa, a feat accomplished by no other Englishman.

A second mission under Lord Amherst was despatched to Peking in 1816, but with the worst results. There was no civility shown the Englishmen, and naturally enough no concessions were granted them.

The difficulties under which the foreign merchants in the south laboured were so great that in 1834 Lord Napier was appointed special Minister to China, and the charter of the East India Company was cancelled. Lord Napier, after many unavailing attempts to obtain an interview with the Viceroy at Canton, died at Macao. His successor, Captain Elliott, endeavoured to conciliate the Chinese Government, while at the same time striking a blow at the illicit opium traffic by giving up over £2,000,000 worth of the drug. This, naturally enough, only made the Chinese more sure of their power, and at last the assistance of the fleet under Sir John Brenmer had to be called in. Brenmer

fought a few engagements on the Canton River, then occupied Chusan and sailed to the mouth of the Peiho River. Any good that might have accrued was negatived by Elliott's acquiescence to the Chinese proposals.

Things drifted from bad to worse, and in 1841 Sir Henry Pottinger captured Amoy, Chusan, Ning-po, Shanghai, and Chin-kiang. He was preparing to bombard Nanking when the Chinese sued for peace. A treaty was signed on August 29, 1842, by which Hongkong was ceded to Britain, and Amoy, Foochow, Ning-po, and Shanghai were opened to foreign trade. This treaty was the first which gave foreign traders any rights in China; before they were only allowed on sufferance.

#### Provisions of the Treaty of 1842 :—

- “(1) Lasting peace between England and China.
- (2) The opening of the ports of Canton, Amoy, Foochow, Ning-po, and Shanghai to Englishmen for trade and residence, all of whom were to be under the jurisdiction of British consular officers.
- (3) The cession of Hongkong.
- (4) Payment of an opium indemnity of six million dollars.
- (5) Three million dollars to be paid for debts due English merchants.
- (6) Twelve million dollars for the expenses of the war.
- (7)

The entire amount to be paid before December 1845. (8) All prisoners of war to be released by the Chinese. (9) An amnesty for all Chinese who had assisted the English in the war. (10) A regular tariff to be drawn up. (11) Official correspondence to be conducted on terms of equality. (12) Conditions for restoring the places held by the English, to be according to the payments of the indemnity. (13) etc."

Trouble soon arose, however, near Canton, and, subsequent to an attack upon some British subjects in 1847, Sir John Davis, Governor of Hongkong, made a demonstration before Canton. He succeeded in obtaining a promise that Canton should be opened to the foreigners in 1849. When the time for the fulfilment of this pledge arrived, the Chinese refused to act, and Sir George Bonham, Davis' successor, allowed himself to be cajoled into doing nothing. In 1854 Sir John Bowring received instructions from Lord Clarendon to insist upon the fulfilment of the promise of 1847. The Governor of Canton refused to meet Bowring in the city. Soon after this there occurred the *Arrow* incident, which aroused so much feeling. The *Arrow* was a British boat on the Canton River, which was seized by the Chinese, who tore down

the flag and made the crew prisoners. When knowledge of this outrage reached the British authorities, the fleet under Sir Michael Seymour advanced to Canton, and the British forces broke into the city. The force under the admiral was too small for effective occupation, and a retreat was necessary. The Chinese promptly claimed a victory, burned the foreign settlements, and killed several foreigners.

Lord Elgin was appointed Minister, and troops were sent to enable him to enforce his will. Owing to the Indian Mutiny these troops were diverted, and the Chinese gained the impression that the British feared them. To disillusionise them, in the interval Admiral Seymour destroyed their fleet at Fatshan. On the arrival of the troops, Lord Elgin captured Canton, and then proceeded to Shanghai, where he announced himself as being ready to meet a Chinese Commissioner. The Chinese refused to treat, and the fleet advanced to Taku, captured the forts, and the expedition then pushed on to Tientsin. The Chinese promptly granted every demand, but when, in the following year, Sir Frederic Bruce arrived at Taku for the ratification of the Treaty, his ships were fired upon by the forts. A punitive expedition was at once resolved upon.

A French and British expedition assembled at Talienshan, and the war of 1860 began. The Taku

Forts were captured, and Tientsin was occupied. Lord Elgin and Baron Gros (the French Minister) entered into negotiations with Prince Kung, the Emperor having left Peking. Seeing that all the Chinese desired was to protract the settlement until the winter, the Allies advanced on Peking. In this advance it was that Sir Harry Parkes, Sir Henry Loch, and several others were captured treacherously by the Chinese. After imprisonment and much cruel treatment they were released upon the approach of the Allies to Peking. The Emperor's Summer Palace, outside the city, was destroyed by the Allies, and all its wonderful treasures of art vanished in the flames. This action has been denounced as unnecessary, but it is probable that it was the wisest step that could have been taken to convince the Chinese of the serious intentions of the Allies.

After the entry into Peking the Treaty of 1858 was ratified. By it additional rights were granted to missionaries and to traders and travellers. New-chwang, Teng-chow, Formosa, Swatow, and Kiung-chow were opened to foreign trade.

In 1847 the Indian Government despatched an expedition through Burma into Yunnan, the object being to encourage commercial enterprise along the route taken. The Chinese Consular Service sent a Mr. Margary, a good Chinese scholar, to assist Colonel Browne, who was in charge of the

expedition. To the surprise of Colonel Browne and Mr. Margary large bodies of Chinese gathered to oppose the advance. Margary rode forward to explain away any misunderstanding which might have arisen, and was murdered by the Chinese. Colonel Browne was forced to withdraw his force towards India. Sir Thomas Wade, British Minister at Peking, made the strongest representations to the Tsung-li-Yamen as to the necessity for punishing the murderers. The usual delay occurred, and finally Sir Thomas Wade left Peking and sailed for Shanghai. This step appears to have alarmed the Chinese, and Li Hung Chang, who had already conducted negotiations without any authorisation, was sent to Chefoo to meet Sir Thomas Wade. The result of the negotiations was known as the "Chefoo Convention," which however remained unratified for twelve years. By this treaty the ports of Ichang, Wuhu, Wen-chow, Pak-hoi, and Ching-kiang were opened to foreign trade. This was a great step towards the object of British ambition, to open up China as a great market for British goods.

In 1886 Great Britain occupied Burma, and thus became near neighbours of the Chinese Empire. During one of the many periods of trouble in Korea, the British occupied Port Hamilton, an island off the south coast of Korea, as a protective measure against Russian aggression. However,

matters were arranged with Russia and China, and the British flag ceased to fly over Port Hamilton in the following year.

The greatest achievement of Britain in China has been the appointment of Sir Robert Hart to the post of Inspector-General of Customs. His position is one of the greatest importance, and as British interests are essentially commercial, it was of the utmost value to be able thus to ensure the carrying on of the business of the Customs. In 1898 Great Britain joined the Western nations in their demands for ports, and leased Wei-hai-Wei.

Since its possession by the British, the trade of Hongkong has grown enormously, and the island is now the trade centre of the Far East. In recent years more land has been acquired in the Hinter-land—a most necessary precaution, as, before, the town of Victoria was at the mercy of whoever might hold the mainland.

Looking back upon the course of British relations with China, we must confess that it has nearly always been the latter country which has scored materially.

## CHAPTER X

### CHINA AS A LAND FOR SPOLIATION

THE white races have pursued a policy with regard to the Chinese Empire which is as foolish and as suicidal to them as it is good and life-giving to the Chinese race. The wild rush of Power after Power to tear a morsel from China's living body has no parallel in history. There was no question of what might China think, or what would be the feelings of the inhabitants? They were left out of count. Thus we see the Western races forcing themselves upon a proud, isolated race, taking such districts as satisfy their greed, and blaspheming righteously because the Chinese do not rush out to meet the spoiler to give away their best harbours and possessions.

To gain some idea of the effect of the grabbing policy of the West upon the Chinese mind, it is well to think what we should say if the Chinese, the Japanese, the Zulus, and the Malays were to come

and take possession of suitable harbours round our coast. Having taken them, when they looked for the smile which always characterises the ready giver—would they find a smile, or would they see a very angry John Bull advancing to throw them out? What would happen is, that every Briton would be a "Boxer," by whatever other name he might be called, and he would be most astonished to find anyone calling him a rebel and an assassin. "What," he would say, "may I not defend my own country against these barbarians, without being called a rebel?" That sentiment expresses exactly the feelings of the Chinese nation with regard to the attempted spoliation of their Empire by the "foreign devils." The Chinese consider the white races as inferiors and barbarians, and are therefore not likely to appreciate their conduct any more than would the people of England appreciate the conduct of savage races, as shown in the above case.

So much depends upon the point of view, that whereas British, or German, or Russian "Boxers" would be patriots, Chinese "Boxers" are rebels, and no name is hard enough for them. It would be a curious exercise to draw up a list of those nations who, as "Boxers," would be patriots and who rebels.

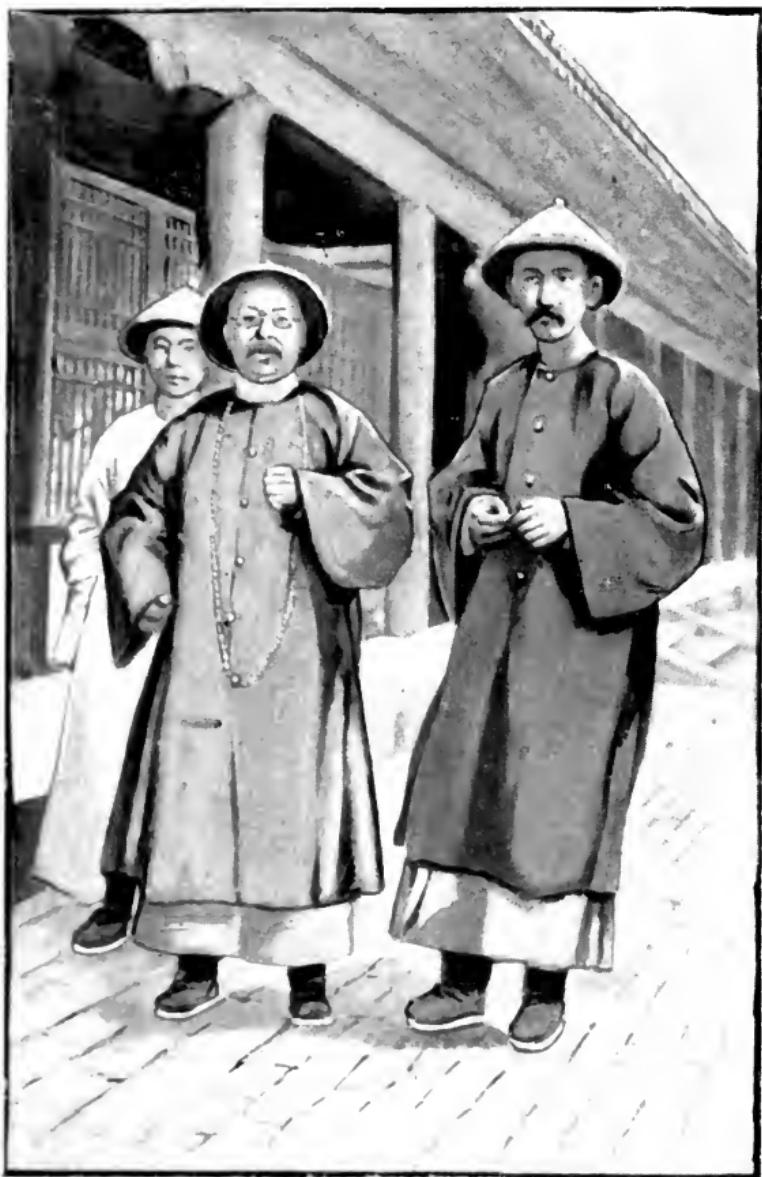
For China herself, it is far safer to have two

stolen ports than one, better four stolen than two; and the Chinese know this well enough. They know that the more they can allow the rights of one predatory nation to overlap those of another, the more likelihood is there of peace for China, while the two advance agents of civilisation fight out their own differences.

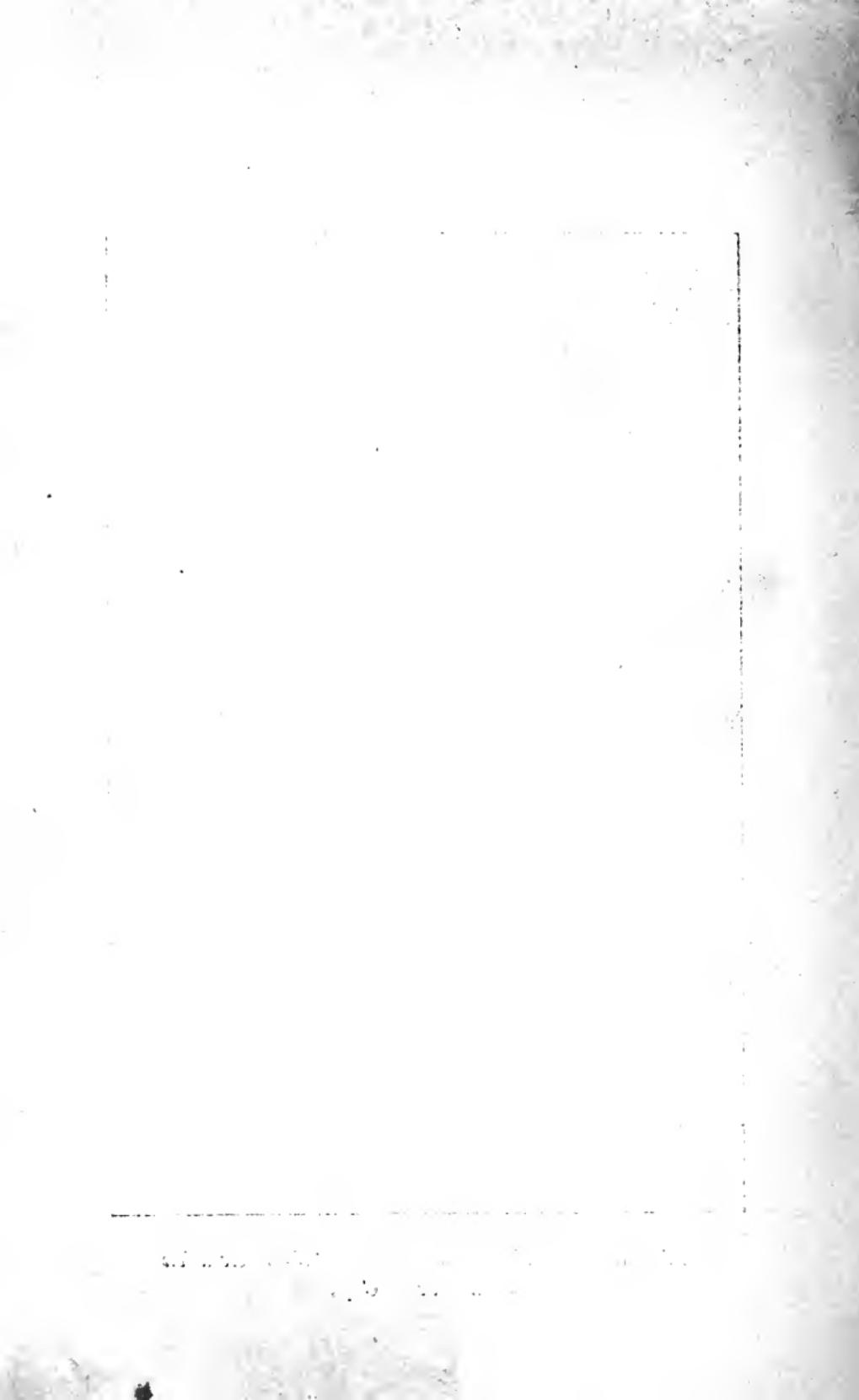
Each Power, whether it be Great Britain, Russia, Germany, or France, seems to regard China as the one place in the world where every other Power is always on the point of stealing a march upon her. Thinking this over, each Power discovers such wonderfully disagreeable things that the other Powers *might* do, if they only thought of them,—and, of course, they *must* think of them,—that it is necessary to rush out and secure something first before those wicked thieving nations have taken everything. It is just the case of a man who, sitting in his house, thinks it will rain, and intends to go to a shop to buy an umbrella. He remembers that he saw several which he rather liked. Suddenly the thought flashes across his mind that Jones and Smith and Robinson also want umbrellas, and they always buy them at the same shop as he does. Dear, dear, he thinks, they will go and get all the best umbrellas, and I shall have none! I must rush to the shop and get one at once! In a fever of

anxiety he rushes out and runs down the street. His evident anxiety calls the attention of all his neighbours to the fact that he is going to buy an umbrella, and they are struck with the same thought, namely, that there is that fellow who is always trying to get ahead of them. So they rush out to get an umbrella before he can. So excited are they by the time the shop is reached, that each catches up an umbrella and rushes home with it, quite forgetting to pay for their prizes. Afterwards, when people come and ask them why they did such a foolish thing, they excuse themselves, and explain that, if they had not rushed, the other fellow would surely have got this very umbrella—an underhand man, always, the "other fellow." When asked why they should forget to pay, they change the subject abruptly.

The European nation to begin the spoliation of China and the obtaining of naval bases was Germany. Thanks to the opportune murder of a German missionary in Shantung, the German admiral was given an excuse for steaming into Kiao-chau Bay and taking forcible possession of the port. Some time back there appeared in a German comic paper a little story, in three pictures. First was depicted the departure of some missionaries for savage lands, while the Government noted down their names and destinations. Then came the killing of the mis-



*Mandarins watching in astonishment the Desecration  
of the Sacred City.*



sionaries, with a little picture showing the joy that the news produced in the Berlin Colonial Office. Finally, there was a picture of the German soldiers and warships taking possession of the land where the murdered missionaries lay; and the officials in Berlin crossed out the name of the missionary, and wrote the name of the new German colony opposite. It was a quaint little story.

The curious part of the occupation of Kiao-chau by Germany lay in the fact that Russia had already received a lease of the bay from the Chinese Government. The Russian officials in China were quite bewildered when they heard that the Czar had assented to the German occupation. "But we have the lease," they said, "it is ours!" As, however, they could not have Kiao-chau, they obtained Port Arthur and Talienwan in the Liaotung Peninsula.

Then, in an evil moment, Great Britain was beguiled into taking over the lease of Wei-hai-Wei from the Japanese, and now she spends her time deciding whether the port shall be made a fortified base, or whether it shall be a secondary base only. France, not to be left in the lurch, obtained possession of Kwang-chow Bay in Kwang-tung. Italy attempted to obtain Sammun Bay, but failed. There were rumours of Belgian, Austrian, and Spanish designs upon the coast of China, but these

Powers did not press any demands which they may have made.

The Chinese opened several more treaty ports, in the hope, apparently, that thus some, at least, of her ports might be left her. This move was good for the trading nations, though, as it is attempted to be shown elsewhere in this book, trade with China will probably never assume the great proportion that optimists dream of.

One ominous feature of the spoliation of China by the nations is the way in which it leads inevitably to new complications and new dangers. Thus we see that the possession of Port Arthur by Russia brings matters between that country and Japan into a very critical state. Korea is the key to both countries,—speaking, of course, of Russia's Far Eastern possessions,—and each nation sits watching, watching, until such a moment as the other shall make a motion towards Korea. Then there will be war, and the Chinaman will smile pityingly at the foolishness of these barbarians, and will count up the gains likely to accrue to himself.

As it is with Russia and Japan in the north, so it is with England and France in the south, with Germany and any Power in the intervening country.

The Chinese are likely to have good cause to be

thankful for the opportune death of that missionary in Shantung before the "allied" armies return to their native lands. The dragon's teeth have been sown, and already the armed men are springing up.

## CHAPTER XI

### THE YELLOW PERIL

EVER present in the dreams of the white nations of the world is the fear of the yellow races, with their countless millions of men and their untiring perseverance. Sometimes this nightmare takes the shape of military aggression on the part of the Chinese millions, by which an irresistible flood of fatalist soldiers shall sweep over the world, and by sheer weight of numbers destroy Western civilisation. While there is small doubt that the Chinese could sweep the world, if properly organised and led, it is not this form of the yellow peril which is the most serious.

Those who know China best prescribe for her revolutions and yet more revolutions, to be succeeded by a period of anarchy extending over several years. They say that such a period would sweep away all the present forms and rules of appointing governing officials, and would enable the men of true merit to come forth and lead the

Chinese. If this were to happen, and great leaders were to arise, then indeed would Europe and America have to look to their safety and their very existence. The Chinese are naturally a peaceable people, content to till the soil, to marry, and to die, without committing any act of aggression. That they can fight however, on necessity, has been seen over and over again in the course of their history. If well led, and especially if fired by some religious fervour, the Chinese could accomplish much, as soldiers. But even if there were no warlike desires kindled in the purgatory of anarchy, the greater danger would be much more to be feared.

Make China progressive and a competitor with Western nations, and the chances are, that the seal has been placed upon the death-warrant of Western trade and civilisation. The white races have everything to lose and nothing to gain by disturbing China from that self-satisfied state of mind in which she has existed for thousands of years.

Let us look for a moment at what would be the effect of completely opening up China to the influence of Western civilisation and trade. It must always be remembered that all rational trade is based on the idea of exchanging surpluses. In China the greatest surplus of all is the surplus of labour, and it is this surplus which the white races will receive from China, not raw materials.

Those who favour most the opening up of China say that the Empire will become a great market for Western goods. They forget entirely that the greater portion of the 400,000,000 of inhabitants gain only their bare living from the tilling of the ground. They have no money to buy luxuries, and even if they had, there would not be any of that waste which constitutes so large a part of the trade among white races. Mr. Colman, the mustard manufacturer, said always that he made his money, not by the mustard people ate but by what they left on their plates, and the saying was very true. In China there is never any mustard left unused on the plates, and this constitutes the great difference between China and the world to which we are accustomed.

Then again there is the fact that the Chinese do not wish to use the articles which we would press upon them. They do not want machinery to drive out hand power, and deprive a large proportion of the people of the opportunity of earning their living. Even in Europe we find working men opposed to the introduction of labour-saving machines — because, they urge, the machines will deprive them of employment. Is it, then, to be wondered at that the Chinese, who, many writers tell us, are now "self-sufficient" and "mostly prosperous," will jump at the idea of what their

relatively poorer and less prosperous white brother turns up his nose at?

Much good will result from an observation of the Chinese when away from their land and exposed to the influence of Western methods and civilisation without intermission. Surely if China itself is to change so completely, thanks to railways, trade, etc., these outposts of the Chinese race will have already adopted the civilisation of the West. Take, then, the case of the Chinese in California, about 100,000 —of whom 30,000 are in San Francisco. Are these Chinese changed? Not a bit of it; they have not altered their dress, their form of life, or their food, in the slightest degree. They buy all their necessaries in San Francisco naturally, but from Chinese merchants. Fifty years of Western environment has been unable to accomplish in California what many think will occur all at once by the opening of China to the world. As in California, so everywhere else where there are settlements of Chinese, or indeed where there is a Chinaman. In the very heart of Melbourne we find a narrow street inhabited by Chinamen—living their own life; and so utterly indifferent to the white people around them, that it is not safe for anybody but a detective to penetrate into Little Bourke Street at night.

Though the Chinese never adopt Western customs, they are ready to make articles for the white people's

use, though inwardly despising their foolishness in employing them.

The availability of Chinese labour for manufacturing purposes will not be seriously questioned by anyone who has seen the success achieved by this people in such industries as that of shoemaking by machinery, and the fashioning of men's and women's garments of all kinds.

Thus the opening of China and the development of her resources is likely to lead to the establishment of Chinese manufactories, which will necessarily seek to dispose of their wares outside of China—because the Chinese do not desire for themselves anything except their daily food. Thus, whichever nation or nations wake in the Chinese, by force or otherwise, a desire to manufacture, will raise up an almost irresistible competitor in the race for the world's markets.

In China labour is so cheap and so abundant that goods may be manufactured at absurdly low prices. In the cotton mills already established at Shanghai the highest wage paid to a native male employee is 50 cents silver (1s. 4d.), while the average wage was 20 to 34 cents silver (5d. to 8½d.) without food; when women are employed they receive from 5 cents to 20 cents silver (1¼d. to 5d.).

There are no laws in China concerning hours of

labour, the employment of children, or Sunday observance. The Chinese will work twelve or fourteen hours a day; and parents are willing to hire out their children at as early an age as it is found profitable to employ them. This is no hardship to the children, who come from a class with whom the alternative lies between vicious idleness and unremitting toil.

The manager of one of the mills made the statement that one American hand would tend six looms and the Chinaman only one. Six times fourpence —the wage of a tender in that mill—makes only two shillings a day, so that Chinese labour is still far cheaper than white.

If China is opened up and forced into activity we have to face the fact that these industrious, thrifty, and cheap labourers will flood the labour markets of the world to the exclusion of anybody else. Of course their rate of wages will go up, but never as high as the white man's. The latter spends more than half his wages in waste, whereas the Chinaman does not waste at all. Then, again, the Chinaman is far happier sleeping in a crowded, ill-ventilated room, even when he is earning as much as ten shillings a day, than if he had the sleeping accommodation thought necessary by white labourers. In every way the Chinese labourer is desirable to the manufacturer. The danger is that the employers

of labour in Europe and America, wearied out by the incessant bickerings and strife in their relations with their white employees, may be inclined to take advantage of Chinese labour to replace them. It is in this way that the true Yellow Peril will come to us, more than by war, or by competing manufacturers in China. It will be an ill day for the white working men of the world when China is so far roused as to send her surplus population out to monopolise the labour markets of the world.

A short survey of the Chinaman as a workman and as a business man will be of interest. A Chinese writer gives the following description of the training of the young Chinese merchant:—

“ His father will not fail to make him see on every occasion that the tradesman must not aim at large profits on a given article, his object in business being, above all, to effect a sale, and that nothing so facilitates a sale as the lowest possible profitable price. To sell cheaply, in order to sell much, such has ever been the principle of our traders, and, from having been put in practice from all time and in all parts, has become a national habit, which has largely contributed to the prosperity of our merchants. I must not omit the following fact:—If a small profit contents our merchant, it is because, on the other hand, his wants are not great. Every one knows that the Chinese race is essentially a sober one. Sober and economical, without vanity or ostentation, the trader of my country has a right to content himself with little. The patriarchal life he leads saves him from the extravagant outlay which follows the desire to make an appearance and to dazzle.”

This extract gives a good idea of the ways in which

Chinese merchants would necessarily compete successfully with their Western rivals.

After the anti-Chinese disturbances in America some years ago, a Government inquiry was held in California, British Columbia, and in Hawaii, in order to judge if there were any truth in the crimes of which the Chinese were accused. Many portions of the report are full of interest, the following extract especially so :—

“California is indebted to the hand labour of the Chinese for—

“The railway communication with the Eastern States.

“The rapid bringing into cultivation of large tracts.

“If not the existence, at least the present development, of the fruit and vine culture.

“The creation of inexhaustible polders by the drainage of vast swamps, which could not have been drained except by Chinese working up to their middle in water, their heads surrounded by clouds of mosquitoes.

“The progress of its manufactures.

“The increase in the trade with Asia.”

Moreover, the report shows the Chinese workmen to be very trustworthy, very intelligent, faithful to their engagements, temperate, active, honest, all able to read and write, sober, enjoying good health by reason of their cleanliness, and that they take a bath every night. What is more, the Chinese require no sort of assistance on the part of the whites.

The Chief-Justice of British Columbia, Sir

Matthew Begbie, gave the following opinion upon the Chinese, which appears in the report:—

" Industrious habits, economy, sobriety, and respect for the law, these make up the four most remarkable qualities of the Chinese, on the confession of both their friends and their enemies. 'Idle, drunken, extravagant and turbulent,' that is just what they are *not*. The cause of their unpopularity lies in this, their steady and unceasing industry can only be compared to that of the ant. I cannot remember ever having seen or even heard of an intoxicated Chinaman."

Another witness, Dr. E. Stevenson, adds—

" It would indeed be surprising if the Chinese nation, sober and industrious as it is, were not morally superior to a people among whom one meets so many lazy and drunken individuals. After an experience, extending over a quarter of a century, I calmly and deliberately assert that such is the case."

Many of the witnesses testified to the excellence of the Chinese, and then proceeded to expostulate against such moral people being allowed to enter into competition with white men; in the words of one witness—

" The Chinese nation being decidedly sober and industrious, it becomes necessary to protect the intemperance of the whites against Oriental temperance."

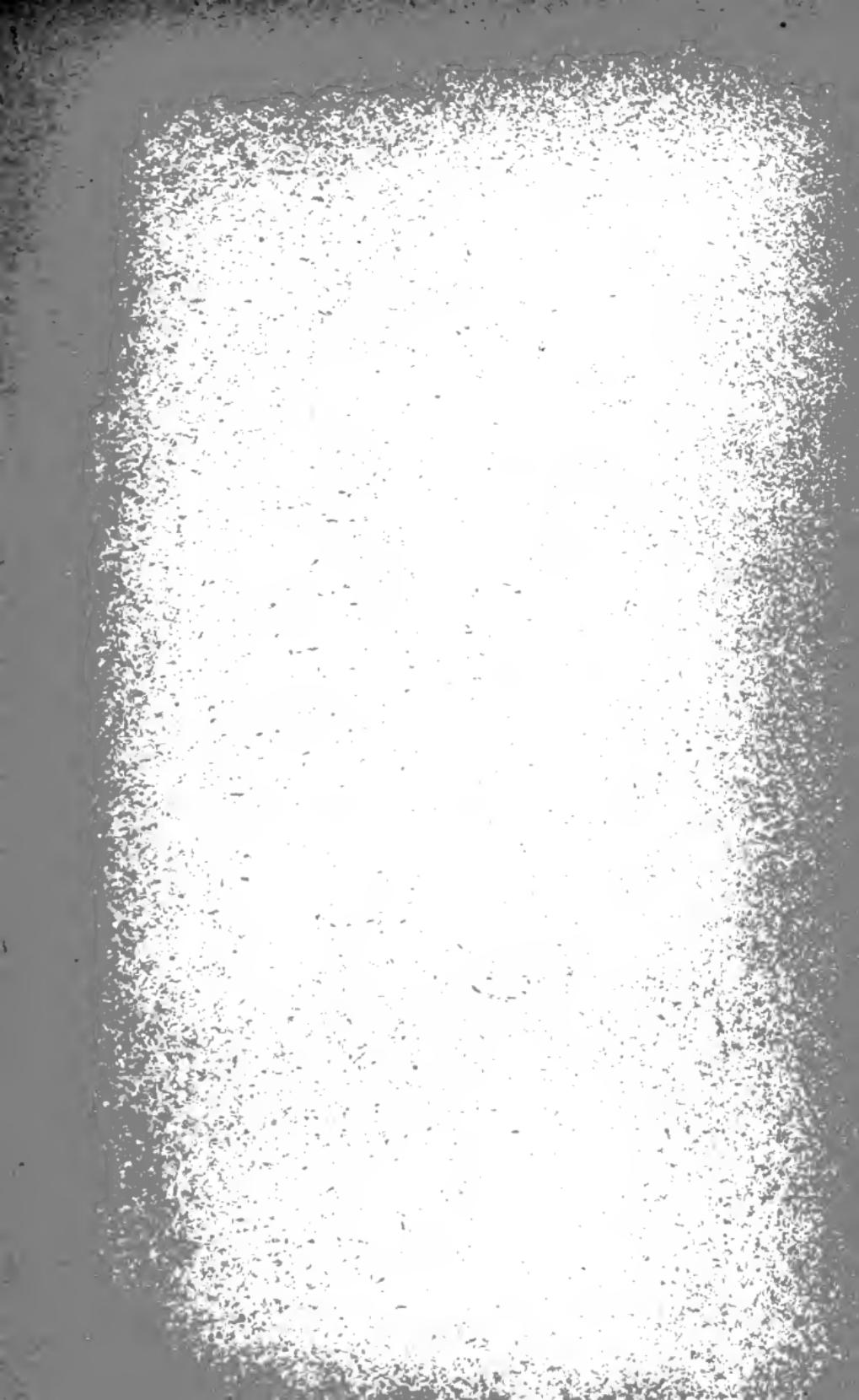
The Yellow Peril is very real indeed, and much to be feared when Chinese workmen are so superior to whites that the latter plead to be protected against them. No wonder that the Chinese nation

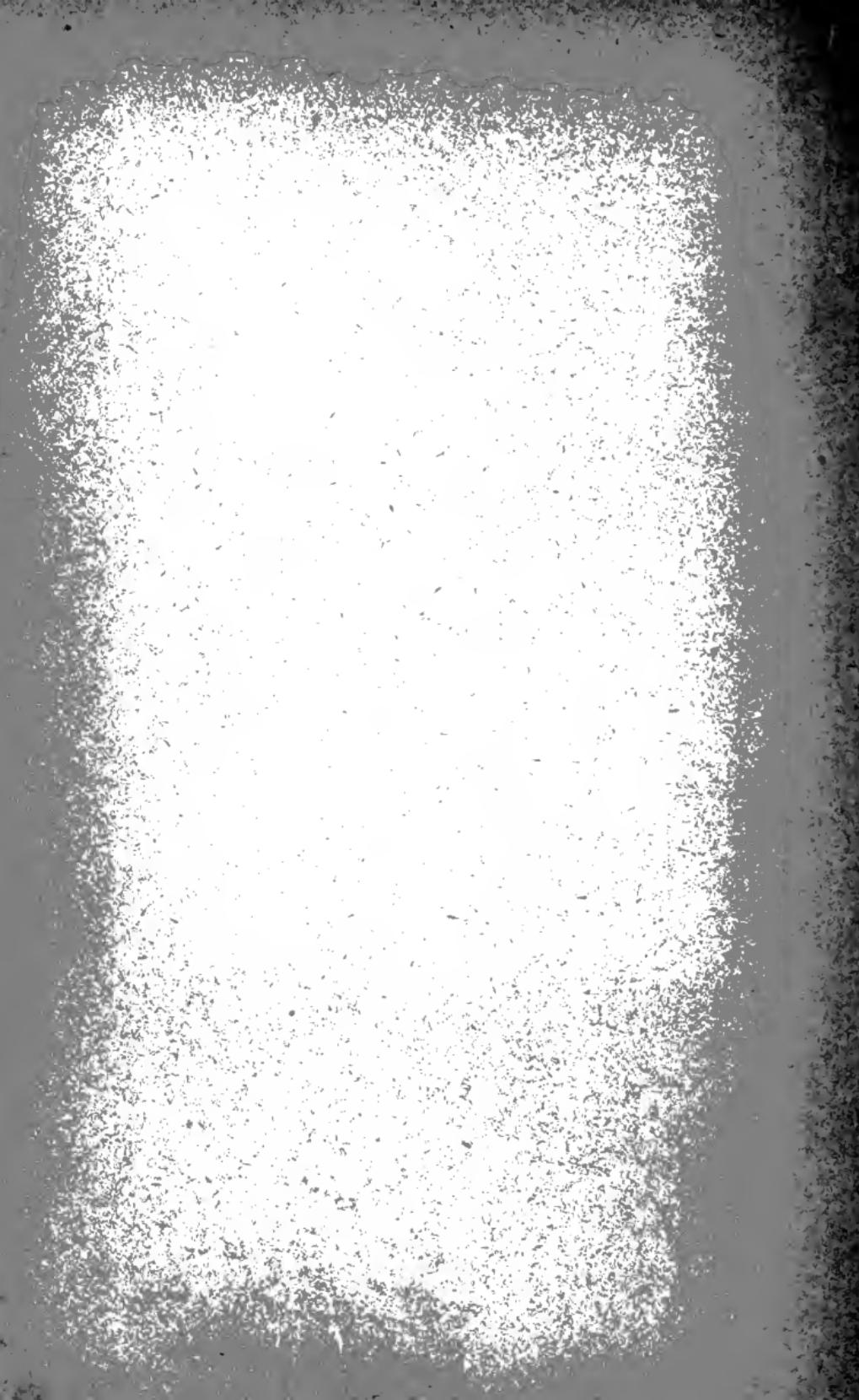
looks down upon the white nations of the world and does not regard them as equals, and there are many excuses for such sentiment.

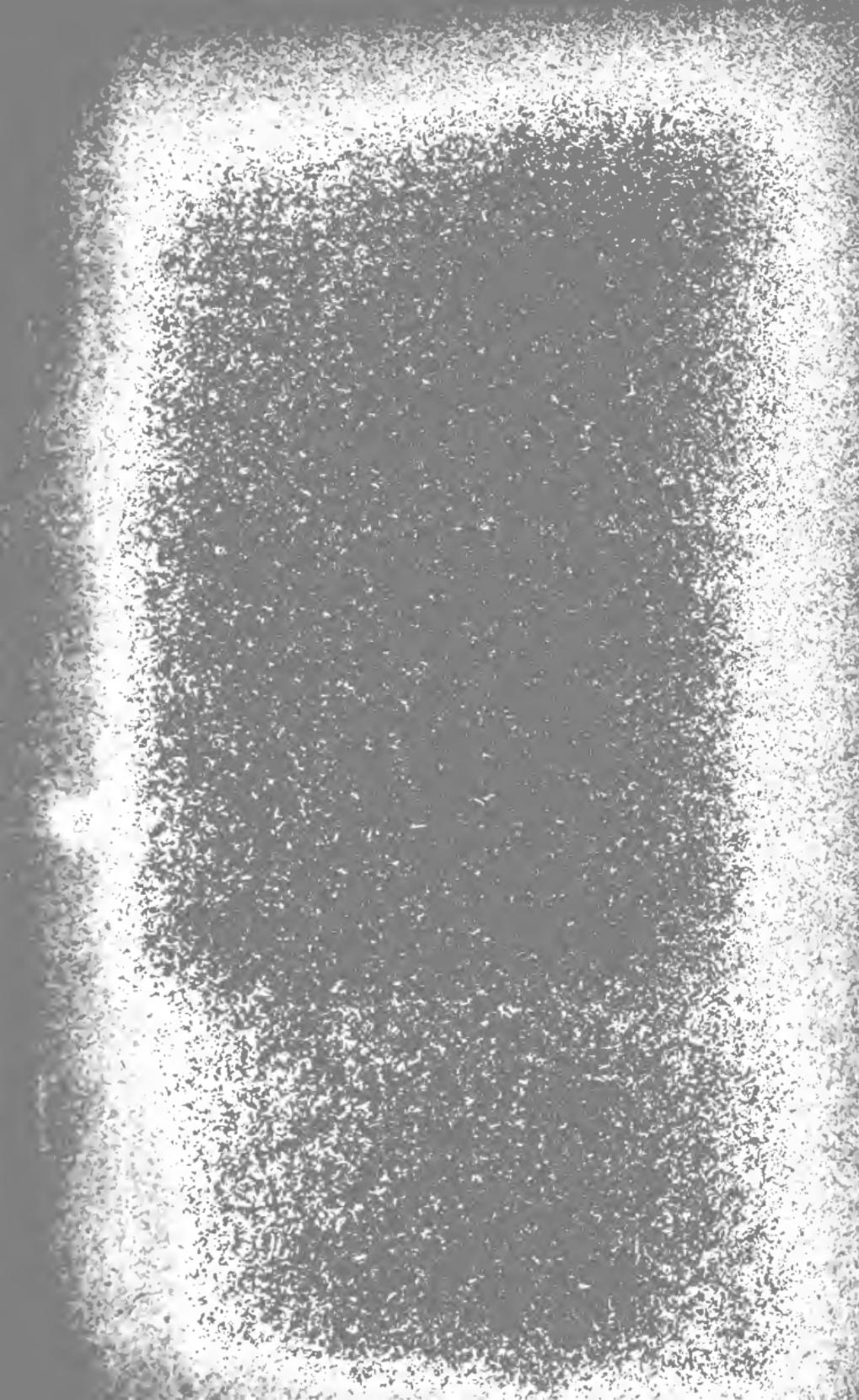
Until the Western nations have reached a higher state of morality, or until the Chinese have sunk considerably below their present level, we had better let China sleep on, and spend our time making certain that no tumult shall ever wake her into an activity which may so easily be fatal to us all.

*I have written this offhand  
and do not claim it as a sample of  
inspiration. It is a simple statement of my  
own belief.*

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